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J. Burkill, del. — E. Morin, lith.

Day & Son Lith^{rs} to The Queen.

THE HABIT ..

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THE HABIT AND THE HORSE;

A TREATISE ON

FEMALE EQUITATION.

BY

MRS. J. STIRLING CLARKE.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, LITHOGRAPHED BY MESSRS. DAY & SON,
FROM
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HERBERT WATKINS.

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P R E F A C E.

FAIR readers, and gentle critics. In launching this little bark on the wide ocean of censure and of praise, I crave your attention for a few moments, whilst I explain the motives that have urged me on so bold a venture. It is not, believe me, that I court publicity as an authoress; my vanity, largely as I may possess my sex's share, can never lead me to hope for such an envied designation from these unpretending pages; much less would I have it supposed that, a desire to trench upon ground hitherto trodden by the more privileged sex, or the presumption of offering any suggestion for their enlightenment, has brought me thus prominently before you. But, as a woman, I write exclusively for the guidance of my own sex, well knowing the vast importance to the fair novice of a manual which brings her acquainted with that equal pride of prince and peasant—the horse—and with the fascinating and elegant science which teaches how to guide and

govern him, and how to guide and govern herself with respect to this noble creature. Would that the subject were in abler hands; still, in default of choicer diction, and a more intimate acquaintance with the rules of authorship, I offer them, in plain and simple phrase, the jottings of many a leisure hour, and the results of the long and careful study of an art, which has ever been to me an object of attention and delight.

It is constantly remarked that, although many books have been published which successfully impart a knowledge of riding to gentlemen, not one has appeared that can be regarded as a sufficiently comprehensive treatise for ladies, who are desirous of perfecting themselves in an accomplishment so peculiarly requiring, in their case, advice and instruction;—more especially, for those fair equestrians, who, by distance or otherwise, are deprived of the assistance of qualified professional teachers, or of that of friends or relatives competent to act as their instructors. The acknowledged necessity, yet absence of such a guide,—the constant solicitation for hints upon the subject,—the unconscious awkwardness, and want of ease and confidence, painfully exhibiting itself in but too many fair riders of the present day, combined with

their general ignorance of the equestrian "*savoir faire*,"—and the long urged wishes of a large circle of friends and acquaintances,—are the inducements that have tempted me to put forth in their present form the gatherings of my own experience.

By some persons, it may perhaps be objected that, practice alone teaches to ride, and that, in an art like this, elaborate rules are uncalled for; by others also that, many of the principles here laid down are too generally known to need repetition; yet, if artificial measures of motion, and the imitation of a good carriage mend even our manner of walking, which nature has taught, and constant practice has at times improved, why should riding, which certainly is still more of an art, be supposed to be easily and sufficiently attained without the assistance of well authenticated rules? Daily experience proclaims the contrary. Do we not continually see ladies who present a good figure while standing on the ground, appearing on horseback helpless and awkward? And, in answer to these precepts being generally known, it is enough to observe how far they are from being practised, and how small is the community of feeling and intelligence found to exist between riders and their horses, to justify their being reproduced; with, it

INTRODUCTION.

"When troubled in spirit, when weary of life,
When I faint 'neath its burthens, or shrink from its strife—
When its fruits turn'd to ashes are mocking my taste,
And its fairest scene seems but a desolate waste;
Then come ye not near me, my sad soul to cheer
With friendship's soft accents, or sympathy's tear:
No counsel I ask, and no pity I need,
But bring me, oh! bring me, my gallant young steed."

DRYDEN.

AMONGST the most exquisite productions of ancient taste, and art, is a gem, engraved with Cupid riding on a lion, illustrating the power and majesty of love in subjecting the fiercest to his control. Charming as is the emblem, and beautiful the design, which has been admired through ages, it may yet be questioned, whether a graceful woman managing a noble steed does not present a finer picture of power over-ruled by gentleness.

Who that has observed some of the many fair equestrians of the present day, accompanied by their brothers or more favoured esquires, sweeping by in their morning canter, glowing with health and cheerfulness, but will readily admit that grace and beauty are never more finely displayed than in the practice and enjoyment of this invigorating exercise?

Some years ago, riding was by no means general amongst the fair sex ; then ladies on horseback were the exception and not, as now, the rule, but "*grace à notre charmante Reine,*"

"Whose high zeal for healthy duties
Set on horseback half our beauties,"

there is now scarcely a young lady of rank, fashion, or respectability, but includes riding in the list of her accomplishments ; and who, whether attaining her end or not, is not ambitious of being considered by her friends and relatives, "a splendid horsewoman." Yet how few can really claim this envied appellation ! Habit may do much, and, coupled with science, a great deal more ; but good riding, with very few exceptions, is neither a habit nor an instinct. Dancing we all know to be an instinctive motion, a natural expression of joy ; but mark the dancing of the rustic milkmaid, and that of the educated and accomplished lady ; the one is an untutored, clumsy bound, the other the very poetry of motion ; and the latter should riding be.

"True knowledge comes from study, not by chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance."

POPE.

To be used to a horse, to put on a habit, vault into a saddle, and gallop along a public ride, are the equestrian accomplishments of many who not unfrequently imagine that, to become, and be esteemed good horsewomen, it is necessary alone to assume the

masculine in manner and expression. But, to sit a horse equally well through all his paces—firmly, yet gently, to control his impatient curvettings; fearlessly, yet elegantly, to manage him at speed, with a hand firm, yet light; steadily, yet gracefully, to keep the seat; preserving the balance with ease and seeming carelessness; to have the animal entirely at command, and, as if both were imbued with one common intelligence, the rider vieing in temper with her steed in spirit; to unite courage with gentleness, and to employ energy at no cost of delicacy;—these are the essential attributes of the lady-like and accomplished horsewoman.

A series of charming French engravings, "*Les Amazones*," some time since published, has shown how well adapted is equestrian exercise to the display of the beautiful and graceful outlines of the female form; yet, if elegance can be thus so well portrayed, so, also, in no case is clumsiness or awkwardness so thoroughly visible or open to comment. The horsewoman is like a statue placed upon a high pedestal, where the faults are as easily discernible as the beauties.

Too thankful indeed can we not be to our most gracious Queen, and,—we repeat it, for inciting in her own amiable person so many of her fair subjects to following her illustrious example, and for thus encouragingly bestowing her high sanction on a recreation which, out of an amusement, becomes the main spring of health and joyousness

to all its participants; for, "*sans être la mode*," it is to be feared that the many great advantages due to horse exercise would never have been so effectively brought before parents, as to induce them to admit riding among the early acquirements of their daughters. Mothers need only consult their medical advisers upon this subject, to learn of the great benefits accruing from its early practice, especially in laying, as it surely does, the foundation of health for after life. What art can plant such lovely roses on the cheek of youth, or give such happy buoyancy to the spirits of maturer years, as the health which comes from this spirit-stirring pursuit? It is confirmed by experience that, of all the recreations with which this generation abounds over those which have preceded it, none creates more real and heartfelt enjoyment in the young, and indeed in all ages, than the exercise of riding; for, seated, as we are, high in air, surrounded by the pure atmosphere, and inhaling it, our elasticity is increased, and an indescribable sense of happiness pervades the whole frame. But to feel this exquisitely, proficiency in the art is indispensable; fear and trembling giving place to that consummate ease and confidence, which can only be obtained by good practice and study.

Riding would certainly be more generally resorted to in youth, as a relief from the severer studies, were the teachers and the teaching more in harmony with the taste and delicacy of the English mind. The objection to riding schools so often made by mothers in

regard to their daughters, is, in many instances, hardly to be wondered at; for, can it be otherwise than repugnant to the feelings of a refined and timid woman to enter some of the riding establishments, and place herself for instruction in the hands of one of the usual teachers, seeing, with but few exceptions, their incompetency to the task they undertake? They are neither choice in manner nor in expression, and are as ill-suited to conducting the graceful movements of a woman on horseback, as to leading her through the "*Minuet de la Cour*" in a ball-room.

How often do we find "*ci-devant*" grooms and horse-breakers put forward as professors of this elegant art, for no other reason than their knowing how to ride, or break a horse, and perhaps to a certain extent being adequate to teaching their own sex! Ought such persons to be tolerated as fit preceptors and companions—companions they must be to a certain extent for the time—of young ladies, who, in the acquirement of riding are unavoidably subjected to a degree of familiarity which teachers of this class but too readily assume?

The art of riding should be taught, if by a man, by a gentleman, if by a woman, by a lady; at all events, by persons in manner and education so far conversant with the usages of good society, that both language and gesture suited to the rank and delicacy of their pupils, may be fairly expected of them. Riding is admitted by the

whole world to be a noble exercise, why then should teaching it be deemed derogatory to more cultivated persons of either sex? There is a mistaken notion that its affinity to horses renders it a bold and masculine pursuit for a woman. This is an absurd impression, which cannot be too speedily effaced. If riding were a coarse attainment, ladies would discard it altogether; indeed, there is no accomplishment, even the refined and courtly one of dancing, that may not be rendered coarse and vulgar by those who are regardless of refinement.

But, as riding is unquestionably both feminine and graceful, when so cultivated, its instructors should be individuals qualified by nature and education, to render it an elegant, no less than healthful, recreation. Until some such reform is made, ladies will never devote sufficient time to the careful study of the art, to become, as a body, the proficient which English women ought to be.

Various reasons induce ladies to leave the riding-school at an early period, some to avoid the rudeness they often meet with, others because, from timidity and delicacy, they are unable to seek from their professors the information which is essential to their comfort and advancement. Many, again, soon tire of its monotony; and were they properly prepared before-hand, and carefully instructed afterwards,—a change the sooner made the better,—they would

then acquire a confidence they can never obtain, as matters now stand, by continually riding within its walls.

Unfortunately, the small amount of information vouchsafed to them by their "*soi disant*" professors, induces the majority to believe there is very little to be learned, and that that little may be all acquired at once. It is from this cause that high-spirited and courageous girls are constantly seen on the verge of danger, and are saved principally by the docility and instinct of the animals they ride.

How frequently do beautiful and gracefully-formed women present so inelegant, and sometimes even so ridiculous an appearance on horseback as to expose themselves to the comments of the spectators, and perhaps to the pencil of the caricaturist? when, if instructed by competent persons, they would, in their equestrian position, show themselves off to even more advantage, and call forth greater admiration in the ride, than, with all their grace, they do, in the ball-room, or the promenade.

It is much to be regretted that gentlemen do not more frequently undertake the office of instructors to their fair relatives. In this country where, in nearly every good family, some of the male members excel in this noble science, to that degree that their performance would put to the blush the pretensions of the class I have referred to, who can be such fit preceptors?

At the same time, it must be admitted that really respectable and painstaking masters have great difficulties to encounter. A riding-master must receive his pupils at such times as they themselves find it convenient to attend. This, in well frequented schools, renders the attempt to classify them properly always difficult, and frequently impossible. It consequently sometimes occurs that when there are a dozen pupils in the school at one time, there will be almost as many degrees of proficiency; still, by the necessary etiquette of the riding-house, they must all, to a great extent, be occupied alike, and a pupil who is well advanced in the science frequently finds herself following a mere novice, who is being carried round in the canter, before she has even acquired the slightest idea of what is demanded in the walk.

Another great evil springs in many instances from the desire of the pupil herself to advance too rapidly: after a few lessons, she neglects preliminary instruction for the purpose of indulging in the canter; whereas, if she could only obtain a just knowledge of all that can be learned in the walk, in three times the number of lessons she would evince considerable aptitude on her own part, as well as testify to the great care and attention of her teacher.

A riding-master, really desirous of communicating to his pupils a thorough knowledge of the art, is frequently thwarted by an impatience like this. The argument that ladies have been taught to ride by

some other master in a few lessons is oftentimes used in reply to his remonstrances, without their considering that such indiscreet haste, promoted as it only can have been by ignorant pretenders, instead of leading to their advancement, in nine cases out of ten confirms them in habits which effectually prevent their ever becoming good horsewomen.

The ideas that the art of riding can be acquired in a few lessons, and that, as soon as a novice can manage to sit a quiet school horse in the canter, she has nothing more to learn, are egregious errors, committed only by those pupils and their friends, who are altogether unacquainted with the science.

It were unjust to attribute to the teacher the failures arising from these various causes ; for, however skilful and well intentioned he may be himself, and carefully as he may have selected his staff of assistants, it is impossible for him, under such circumstances, to render to his pupils that justice which it is doubtless his earnest desire and hearty effort to afford.

The practice of riding differs from most studies, in its being capable of becoming a delightful amusement, and recreation, almost simultaneously with its commencement, and during the whole time of the pupil's progress towards proficiency. But in one respect it

strictly resembles all others, namely, in this,—that the rudiments must be first thoroughly acquired. “*Disce prima elementa*,” was wisely insisted on by the ancients as the law of success in every thing worth acquiring. As a general rule, the best horsewomen are those who have been accustomed to ride from early youth. The pliancy and natural “*abandon*” of childhood, and their untiring practice on that best of riding-masters, a clever and distinct actioned pony, gives them a knowledge and experience which it is the object of this work (so far as is possible) to develop in a short treatise; let it then be remembered, that no measure of instruction can supply to an adult, that inappreciable amount of intuitive knowledge which children acquire during their early pony-riding days, particularly when several boys and girls are assembled and riding together; some are sure to be more apt than others, and in their amusing vanity of giving instruction, beget a rivalry by which they reciprocally acquire and create confidence. Even the playfulness of the boys, in teasing the girls and their ponies, though sometimes productive of danger, generally stimulates their skill and courage; for, if once they find they can manage their little steeds, they become as fond of the sport as their brothers, whom they then repay with interest. Their “hair-breadth ’scapes” are faithfully remembered, and the frequent recurrence of these brings forth the utmost care and pride in so managing their ponies, as to save themselves from again incurring the reproach of falling. Thus, they eventually attain a skill which “grows with their growth, and strengthens with their strength;” and hence, as

they change with their own stature from the diminutive pony to one of larger size, and from this to the horse, they become perfectly qualified to manage him in all his paces. Besides, there is a degree of decision in the hand of a lady accustomed to country life, and who consequently commenced her equestrian exercises in childhood, that becomes a sort of free-masonry between herself and her horse.

It has been, and still is, a prevailing opinion with many ladies, that riding is only suited to the young. How this absurd notion sprung up it is difficult to conceive, on calling to mind, that, in the olden time, the practice of women of all ages to ride on horse-back was general; and that, in those days, a good old age was assuredly attained, whilst more than half the maladies of the present day were entirely unknown. At this moment there are few who cannot, in their own immediate circle, number at least one lady friend approaching to, or even on the verge of three score years and ten, who attributes her excellent health to the use of this exercise from early youth, and who, even now, can throw off her years in the enjoyment of the fine pure air of a morning country ride.

“For time shall with his ready pencil stand,
Retouch her figure with his gifted hand,
Mellow soft colours, and embrown the tint,
Add every grace which time alone can grant;
To future ages shall her fame convey,
And give more beauty than he takes away.”

DRYDEN.

Why should we not then revive the fashion of our ancestors, and more especially since, with the improvements of the age, riding in the present day has been rendered so much more easy and independent, by the substitution of the delightful canter for the disagreeable jog-trot of by-gone times ; and of the side-saddle, with the fair rider's own guidance, for the "Pisana" fashion, which still exists in Mexico, of the lady riding in front of her cavalier, or for the pillion, where she rides behind ? This latter position has been playfully described by a modern poet :—

" This riding double was no crime
In the first good Edward's time ;
No brave man thought himself disgraced
By two fair arms around his waist ;
Nor did the lady blush vermillion
Dancing on the lady's pillion."

Though this is the poet's view of the case (and poets view most things "*couleur de rose*"), yet Mr. Leigh Hunt would doubtless be inclined to agree in the opinion, that the conventional pleasantness of pillion travelling must invariably depend upon the cavalier.

If, for a moment, we cast a glance at times bygone, what an amusing contrast we find to the manners and customs of the present day.

A celebrated novelist describes his heroine as riding post from Somersetshire to London, along the Bath Road, attended only by

her maid, and both on horseback: we sympathise with the fair SOPHIA and the sleepy HONOUR at the inns on the Western road during such a journey. Again, how agreeable, though so strongly combined with the ludicrous, are the images presented to the mind by the scenes in the "Vicar of Wakefield," where the family ride to the village church.

To go back to a remoter period, we read, in Stowe's Commentaries, that, "Richard the Second, being threatened by the rebels of Kent, rode from the Tower of London to the Miles End, and with him his mother, because she was sick and weak, in a *whirlicote*;" and this is described as an ugly vehicle of four boards put together in a clumsy manner. In the following year Richard married Anne of Luxembourg, *who introduced the riding upon side-saddles*, and so "was the riding in those whirlicotes forsaken, except at coronations and such like spectacles."

Then we have Knighton's description of the rank and beauty of his day (1341). In speaking of the public amusements of that time, especially of *tournaments*, he says "these tournaments are attended by many ladies of the first rank and greatest beauty; they are dressed in party-coloured tunics, half of one colour and half of another, their tippets are very short, their caps remarkably little, and wrapt about their heads with cords, their girdles and pouches ornamented with gold and silver, and they wear short swords, called daggers, before,

a little below their waists ; they are mounted on the finest horses, with the richest furniture, and in this attire they ride about from place to place in quest of tournaments."

And what can be more pleasant, on a summer's morning, looking from the windows of some country mansion on a rural road in Kent, than to image to ourselves the "Pilgrims of Chaucer" on their way to Canterbury? The Nun, the Prioress, and the buxom Widow, with the bells on their palfreys jingling a merry chorus to the ringing laugh of the fair riders. Then the "processes," the "processions," and the hawking parties, of the olden time. We see them now, in all their life, in some of Wouvermann's pictures, and in that exquisite one of Landseer, "The Lady of the Castle in feudal times," as she rode forth with

"Mettled hound and managed hawk,
On palfrey rich and rare."

But there remains now only the rich canvas representation, and the author's glowing description, to remind us of such scenes ; for, with the mighty change that time, the great innovator, has effected, nearly all trace of those days of quaint adventure, romance, and chivalry has long since passed away, with as little chance of ever again returning, as of the modern railway train giving place to the aristocratic travelling* chariot, or to the mail coach of twenty years ago.

Since then, in these our own days, riding is no longer necessary as a means of ordinary transit, and can be regarded only in the light of an agreeable and healthful recreation, and of a lady-like accomplishment, it is obvious that, something more than a mere jog-trot acquaintance with a horse's back is absolutely required. Years are devoted to the attainment of music, languages, and the various accomplishments which qualify a lady for the drawing-room; whilst an art, of which the ignorance may positively endanger life, is either entirely neglected, or consigned to a few ill-directed lessons deemed sufficient for enabling her to enter a public ride, where, amidst the vast number of horses of all tempers, and riders of all kinds, a lady must really ride well, even to guard against the many accidents which are likely to occur from the bad riding of others.

If the comparatively uninitiated knew the value of good riding, its perfect acquirement would be more eagerly sought, and the union of safety, with an easy and graceful style, be more frequently attained.

In the provinces, excellence in the art is often met with amongst the female members of many an old county family; and, if it be so much prized, where, frequently, there are but few to witness the beauties of an elegant equestrian deportment, how much more so should it be by those, who are preparing to enter a public and fashionable ride like *Rotten Row*, thronged with fair candidates for

equestrian fame; the resort, too, of every noble stranger, who, charmed with a "*coup d'œil*" such as no other country can boast, will doubtless on returning to his native land, descant on horsemanship, or excellence in riding, as not the least amongst the many valued attributes of Albion's daughters.

THE HABIT.

"She wore, what was then somewhat universal, a coat, vest, and hat, resembling those of a man; which fashion has since called a RIDING HABIT."—(*Diana Vernon*). SCOTT.

"My maids come to my dressing bower
And deck my nut-brown hair;
Where'er ye laid a plait before,
Look ye, lay ten times mair."

SCOTT.

EQUESTRIAN attire should be perfectly exclusive, distinct from every other, and resembling nothing but itself. Its chief characteristics should be simplicity, and elegance, with everything masculine carefully avoided; and the same taste that has thrown aside the gilded tinsel, and glittering caparison of the palfrey, should banish all assemblage of gaudy colours from the dress of the fair rider.

The wavy elegance of its ample folds, and the indescribable charm that has ever belonged to it as a costume, render the riding habit extremely attractive. Many a fair girl has captivated more hearts in a beautifully fitting habit, than when she was arrayed for the most distinguished "*r union*." And how many instances have we not, on record, of brilliant marriages, and princely dowers, being won by the faultless symmetry, and graceful bearing so frequently displayed within it? How essential then that infinitely more

attention be paid to its make and fashion than is usually bestowed upon it. Nothing may be neglected that can add ease or grace to such an exquisite costume. A well cut and beautifully made habit will greatly improve a but moderately good figure; how much more so, then, will the same appliance set off one on whom nature has been lavish of her gifts?

The body of a habit ought to be carefully made to fit the bust, ample room being always allowed across the chest, which generally expands in riding. It should also be sufficiently wide, and properly cut at the back of the neck, to prevent that disagreeable tightness so often experienced, and so completely marring the easy and graceful movement of the head. Nothing can be more unpleasant than the peculiar feeling of suffocation caused by a badly made habit, a sensation far more intolerable on horseback, than in any other position; not to mention the stiff and inelegant appearance thus given to the whole figure.

The waist must not be too long, else it will wrinkle, it should be shorter than in ordinary attire. Many ladies erroneously conceive that the body of a habit will remain in the same unwrinkled position on horseback, as when first adjusted. The peculiarity of the seat, and the constant motion of the body, will prove to them, after a moment's consideration, that this cannot be the case if there is too great length of waist.

The sleeves should never be made too tight, especially round the upper part, or the easy movement, so necessary to the arms when riding, will be impeded.

As it is the pride of a ship's commander to see her glide along "*all taut*," and as it would be most offensive to his eye, and destroy the symmetry of her sailing, were any loose rope, or sheet, seen shaking in the wind; so, and with such care, should the fair equestrian avoid wearing, on horseback, anything that may flutter in the breeze. I would for this reason direct the especial attention of my fair readers to the inelegant flutter of the "*basque*" of many of the Polka bodies, now so much in vogue. Becoming as this fashionable appendage may be in the repose of ordinary costume, its effect in the side-saddle is wholly the reverse; for no sooner does the horse change the gentle walk for the more brisk and animated pace of either trot, or canter, than the "*basque*," acted upon by the wind, commences flapping up and down the back to the destruction of all grace and beauty, and impresses the spectator at a short distance with the belief that, it is the rider's figure, and not merely a portion of her dress, that is in such a constant and extraordinary state of volation.

Unless the cloth be of full broad-cloth width, it will be necessary to have two breadths and a-half in the skirt, to afford an easy and graceful flow of drapery. The very common fault of too great

length, however, should be carefully avoided, as not only cumbrous and unnecessary, but dangerous from its tendency to catch the horse's feet when cantering, to say nothing of the discomfort that arises from its wet and bespattered condition in muddy weather. The hope of adding height, and grace, to the figure, by an increased length of skirt, is completely frustrated by the inelegant, and even unsightly appearance it assumes, when once it exceeds a specified distance of the rider's feet; for it is then apt to enfold itself, and not unfrequently to appear as though it were tied or pinned together underneath them.

A pocket, on the left hand side of the skirt, suitable for a card-case or purse, will be found useful. It should be made to button, or its contents may be shaken out.

The habit is usually made of cloth, but in summer, if found too warm, a lighter material, called "*cachmerette*," may be substituted. It has all the appearance of very fine cloth, without its weight or warmth, and, being twilled, is much stronger, and less likely to tear. But, when made of this or any other light texture, there should be a deep hem to add weight, and substance, to the lower part of the skirt, and prevent its being blown about by the wind.

The colours worn in the present day are usually dark, blue prevailing; in choosing a colour, the wearer's complexion is always

to be considered, as on the taste and judgment herein displayed greatly depends the becomingness of the Habit.

The Habit may be worn either braided, or plain, according to fashion, or the taste of the wearer.

When the body of the Habit is closed in front, a small turn-over fine linen collar is usually worn ; and, when open, a habit-shirt of the same material should be displayed.

Embroidered cambric fronts also have an elegant appearance, but the collar should always be thick, to contrast with the dark Habit.

If the sleeves are made tight to the wrists, small white cuffs, corresponding with the collar, and fastened inside the cuffs of the Habit, look very neat when the gloves are taken off. If wide, full under sleeves of the same material as the habit-shirt, confined by a narrow band at the wrists, have an equally pretty appearance.

In concluding this subject, I would particularly impress upon the fair rider, the necessity for caution in the selection of her Habit-maker. Few tailors understand the peculiar cut of a well fitting Habit ; so as to afford in the rise and fall of the female bust, that necessary degree of ease, where ease is indispensable ; and, avoiding

undue pressure, how to give that elegance to the waist, which, without infringing on Nature's laws, imparts such bewitching grace to the equestrian costume.

Riding stays should be made elastic over the hips, with particular attention to having the "busks" very short. They are also to be worn without shoulder straps.

Trousers are indispensable both for modesty, and comfort: dark colours are preferable to white; for if the habit flies up, which is almost certain in cantering, particularly in windy weather, the white immediately catches the eye of the spectator, whilst by being dark, the trousers appear as a portion of the Habit, and pass unnoticed. The best material for riding trousers either in summer, or winter, is soft, thin chamois leather, as it generally prevents the knee, which goes round the pommel, from being chafed. The trousers should be covered from the knee to the foot with cloth, or any light texture of the same colour as the Habit, and should always be strapped under the boots.

Ladies who ride much will find it necessary to wear kid, or leather boots; for, when made of light material, the left boot is soon damaged by the friction of the stirrup. If a lady uses the slipper stirrup, the heels of the boots should be made low, but the Victoria stirrup requires a military heel, which ought to be brought well forward

towards the hollow of the foot, to prevent the stirrup's going too far back, and hurting the ankle. The boots should be closed with laces or elastics; buttons being exceedingly inconvenient and objectionable. A light Wellington boot is sometimes preferred, because it guards the left leg from the friction of the stirrup-leather, and, having no seam in front, saves the instep, if high, from being chafed by the stirrup-iron.

All superfluity of under-clothing should be dispensed with, both for convenience in riding, as well as for personal appearance; a large "*tourneure*" on horseback is preposterous, particularly as it becomes considerably augmented, after cantering, by the petticoats gathering up under the habit. At the same time, the error of extremes into which some ladies run, by the absence of all petticoats, must be carefully avoided. Few indeed look well shorn of these necessary appendages to the equestrian costume, if only moderately used. And is it not strange to see a slight figure whose general costume, whether for home, promenade, or ball, resembles more the hoop of Queen Charlotte's Court, suddenly emerge from this voluminous display, and appear as one of the beauties of the reign of George the Second, when we are informed it was "*la mode*" for ladies to vie with each other in the scantiness of their nether garments? Truly, fashion rules all things, and accustoms the eye to a great deal; but, in the midst of the present amplitude of dress, the opposite extreme fails to create admiration.

White petticoats are objectionable for the same reason as white trousers, and may be substituted by black satin or silk, which, in cold weather, ought to be well wadded, and quilted from the knee downward, and rather more closely quilted on the right side, as that part, going over the pommel, wears the faster. However neat and pretty white petticoats may look before starting, by the time the ride is over, even in fine weather, they present a very "*chiffone*" appearance, quite unfit for display when the Habit is gathered up after dismounting.

It is rarely found necessary to wear a second petticoat, if the black one be sufficiently full, and gathered at the back, and one may be far more easily managed on horseback than a greater number, which white requires.

With respect to the "Hat," so many new styles have of late appeared, that I am induced to quote the well known couplet.

"Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to set the old aside."

Nothing can be more becoming, if extremes are avoided, than some of the pretty riding hats of the present day. The plumed hat is, indeed, the only article of riding gear we wish to see preserved among the fashions of our ancestors. We may gladly leave to Dame Juliana Berners, her hoods, and whimples,—to the lovelier, yet

luckless Arabella Stuart, her stiff corset and tippets ; to the Duchess of Gordon, her gold-laced jacket, cocked hat, and hunting whip. Yet we cannot but admire the Countess of Ogle, the Northumbrian heiress, with her pretty cavalier hat and feather, as she is, in an engraving, represented, cantering up a beautiful avenue in her father's park, with the Duke of Newcastle caracoling at her side.

Attention should be paid to the even, and easy, fit of the hat, so that it be neither too small, nor too large,—the former will be sure to cause pain, and the latter, a continual disarrangement of the hair.

Veils are very useful, but should always be worn short, for there are times when the flying about of a long veil may tend to confuse, and, especially so, a novice. Black silk netted veils are the best, as these, from their weight, are not so easily affected by the wind ; falling closer to the face, they are better suited to the broad-leafed hat, and lying in much smaller compass than lace, or gauze, they have a far more comely appearance when turned back over the brim. Gauntlets, or gloves, may be worn according to taste.

A few words respecting the whip may not be inappropriate : it undoubtedly forms part of the fair rider's equipment, and, by a novice, is not unfrequently the first article obtained. The whip must be regarded as a requisite aid in riding, and not as mere orna-

ment : it should be straight, and light, but of sufficient resistance to admit of being pressed against the horse's side. A limp whip should never be used, being dangerous from its frequently teasing, and exciting the horse without the rider's being conscious of it. Thin skinned horses, though perfectly quiet in other respects, will often become quite unmanageable from excitement caused by flies, and the kind of whip just spoken of will frequently produce the same results : its mounting may be as costly, or simple, as the fancy pleases, provided care is taken that, there is nothing on it which is likely to catch in the veil, or other portions of the dress.

Much of the enjoyment of riding depends upon leaving the dressing-room self-satisfied, and perfectly free from those many little annoyances that proceed from inattention, and ignorance of what is required.

Although "ye tangles of Neara's hair" may read very prettily in Milton's verse, they will be found by no means agreeable about the face, during a brisk ride, on a windy day. In whatever way the hair is worn, great care should be observed when dressing, to arrange it so as not to cause inconvenience during the ride. Many a one, pleasant in anticipation, has been completely marred by the early disarrangement of the rider's "*chevelure*." There are few ladies but must have experienced this at some time or other, particularly when the fashion of wearing the gentleman's hat was universal.

Should the mode of wearing curls again resume its sway, I would advise novices, and all whose hair falls easily out of curl, not to adopt this fashion for riding. The hair plaited, or worn in bands, or rolled at each side, according to the present custom, is far more convenient,—the latter not only agrees better with the whole attire, but is admirably adapted to the style of hat now in vogue.

The hair should be dressed firmly, but not tightly, as the continued strain on the scalp invariably produces headache.

Ladies who possess a luxuriant quantity of hair, and who find it necessary to confine a portion of it under the hat, in default of any better method of their own, can do so, with the greatest degree of comfort, in the following manner:—Let the hair that is not required for the rolls at the side be very evenly combed up towards the crown of the head, turned “*en casque*,” and then twisted, so as to form a figure of eight sideways, and be brought well forward before placing the comb, that it may not interfere with the easy fit of the hat. The teeth of the comb should be pressed back into the *torsade*. If this is so carefully done as not to drag the hair, or to allow the teeth of the comb to press upon the head, the mode recommended will be found to have the advantages of firmness, and convenience. It may, perhaps, feel peculiar on the first or second essay, but this feeling will soon wear off with custom. It will also serve as a means for securing the front

hair with greater facility, and firmness, for the rolls having been adjusted, the ends should cross at the back of the head to the opposite side, and, if long enough, be coiled round the "*torsade*;" if not, they might be platted to afford a sufficient stay for the hair-pin to attach them there. By these means the rolls will meet at the back of the neck, and render the use of a "*cachepeign*" unnecessary.

Those ladies who still adhere to the gentleman's hat, and who ride much, will find this an excellent mode of obviating an annoyance they must frequently experience.

As few hair-pins as possible should be used—they often cause annoyance by falling out, and hurting the head, when getting displaced, and the use of strings, for tying it, is most injurious to the hair.

And now a few words on that inevitable ruin to life and beauty—"tight lacing." I pray all fair equestrians to pause and reflect awhile, ere they indulge in such a pernicious practice. Great as is the evil in the ordinary circumstances of dress, it is a hundred-fold increased on horseback, in consequence of the peculiar position of the body from sitting sideways. In a long ride, tight lacing invariably causes pain in the right side, and its frequent recurrence as surely leads to disease. Thus, instead of deriving that health, and benefit,

which otherwise results from horse exercise, the fair rider, by her own act, lays the foundation of an insidious malady, which either renders her life one of lingering misery, or hurries her to a premature grave.

How destructive to beauty is tight lacing, is undeniable, in its completely marring that easy and elegant movement of the figure, so essential to grace in the rider. A lady may easily convince herself of this result by remarking the peculiar stiffness it imparts to others, when she can no longer doubt of its producing the same effect upon herself. In a public ride there is scarcely anything more provocative of satire, and ridicule, than those unnaturally pinched-in waists that have acquired for their owners, the uncourteous, but not inappropriate appellation of "hour-glasses."

In dressing, every thing should be avoided that may cause uneasiness on horseback, such as pins carelessly placed, and strings either too tight, or too loose, for trifles like these are of more consequence than the uninitiated imagine. Not guarding against these seemingly little matters often destroys the pleasure of an otherwise delightful ride, and therefore should be well attended to during the business of the toilette. Pins should be dispensed with, as much as possible; strings, buttons, or hooks and eyes, being much safer, and less likely to occasion inconvenience.

Rings should be dispensed with whilst riding, as frequently causing the hand to swell, and preventing its closing properly on the reins. If a watch is worn, the chain should be confined by the hook or button of the Habit, to prevent its shaking about in the trot, or canter.

Ladies who suffer from cold feet in winter should make a point of warming them before mounting, as it is much easier to keep up the circulation, than to create it. Lamb's-wool socks, or warm soles in the boots, will be found very comfortable.

There is an easy and graceful style of holding the Habit whilst a lady is waiting for, or walking to, her gallant steed, which contrasts greatly with the many unbecoming modes so frequently met with. It constitutes in itself a picture which at once distinguishes the finished rider, and it should be carefully observed by all who study to become so.

To hold the Habit properly, the skirt should be first taken at each side as far down as the arms will reach without stooping, drawn out evenly to its full extent, and gathered up until it is sufficiently short for walking. The hands should then be brought forward, with one rather higher than the other, so as not to appear stiff, or formal. If the skirt is made in two breadths it

should be gathered up from the seam at each side, otherwise it will drag on the ground behind.

When a lady is accompanied by a gentleman, she should hold the Habit, on the side on which he is walking, so far down only as enables her to take his arm, and clear the skirt from the ground, turning a small portion of it over the thumb to prevent its escaping from her hand.

The Habit can be easily arranged at will for travelling, for walking, or for the house, by a very simple and expeditious mode, which will be found exceedingly convenient for country visits, should a lady be induced to pause in her ride, and pass the day from home.

In making the skirt, there should be attached inside, at equal distances round the waist, seven or eight loops of strong ribbon, reaching to within an inch of the knee; these are to be met by the same number of double strings, also fastened inside, at such a distance from the hem that, when tied to the loops, the length of the skirt becomes that of an ordinary walking dress, and forms a double skirt, with the edge of the hem only allowed to touch the ground. It is to be remembered, that the loops, and not the strings, must proceed from the waist, otherwise, the skirt will rarely be of an equal length all round.

When the skirt is thus prepared for the house, the body should be opened in front to display the habit-shirt, white cuffs to match the collar be fastened inside the sleeves, the hair be appropriately arranged, and then the "*tout ensemble*" forms a very attractive equestrian "*costume de visite*."

THE HORSE.

“ Full of fire, and full of bone,
All his line of fathers known ;
Fine his nose, his nostrils thin,
But blown abroad by the pride within !
His mane a stormy river flowing,
And his eyes, like embers, glowing
In the darkness of the night,
And his pace as swift as light.—
Look around his straining throat
Grace, and shifting beauty float !
Sinewy strength is on his reins,
And the red blood gallops through his veins.”

BARRY CORNWALL.

It has been remarked of the fair sex, and by the Lords of the Creation, that the former are too prone to riding the “high horse,” whenever opportunity is afforded them. If my fair readers will, however, graciously take advice from one, who has had considerable experience in the side-saddle, they will, (in this literal sense of the phrase), chase away at once and for ever, so great a delusion, if health, ease, elegance, and comfort, are to form any part in the accomplishment they are about to cultivate.

A lady, if she can avoid it, ought never to ride a horse exceeding fifteen hands, two inches in height, whether her figure be the

exquisitely graduated outline of a Venus, or Nature have moulded her on the exuberant and ampler proportions of a Hebe.

The appearance of the fair equestrian depends far, more than is generally imagined, on the selection of a horse adapted to her figure. It is frequently said of a young lady, that she should not ride, because her form is unsuited to the exercise. This is a cruel mistake. Let no one be debarred from this most healthful of all recreations, unless age has robbed the limb of its activity, and kind nature has suggested some softer cushion than the platform of a side-saddle. The great secret lies in the judicious selection of the animals they ride. The most beautiful figures, of whatever height they may be, will gain in elegance by attention to this rule, and those to whom Dame Nature has been less bountiful, will be doubly repaid for its observance.

I remember riding, twice in the same day, with a young friend, and being particularly impressed with the correctness of this view. She was below the middle height, but of exquisite beauty, both in face and figure. In the morning, she was mounted upon a handsome well-broken pony, of fourteen hands, when their united appearance evidently called forth much admiration. Indeed, as with quiet ease she cantered down Rotten Row, they might have formed a fit, nay, an envied subject, for the painter's or the sculptor's art. In the afternoon, she was indebted to a kind friend for another ride; but,

on this occasion, the steed was a magnificent grey hunter, nearly sixteen hands high. Alas, the charm was gone! for notwithstanding her own natural grace, and the splendid shape and action of the horse, this incongruity of size, and her want of power to hold such an animal together, coupled with her ineffectual efforts to pull him up from the canter to the walk, which had heretofore been performed by a masculine hand, rendered her appearance the reverse of what it had been in the morning. How closely allied is the sublime to the ridiculous, was here manifest enough, in its eliciting as it did from a spectator, a satirical, but not inappropriate remark, that was very distressing to the "*amour propre*" of my fair friend.

But it is not for the sake of appearance only that this rule should be observed; it is equally, if not more important as regards comfort, though no lady can look well on horseback, when not perfectly at her ease. I am, however, now alluding to those who are required to ride in search of that most inestimable of all blessings, health. The physician's advice to ladies to take horse exercise is frequently rendered of no avail, because of the great discomfort and consequent fatigue produced by it. It is useless to assure them, as may be truly the case, that their horses are unusually quiet or well trained; in vain are their saddles, and riding gear, so arranged that no possible inconvenience can arise, the uneasy feeling still remains the same, and, thus, a course from which so much benefit was expected, is abandoned in despair.

I am convinced, and I speak from experience, having seen the evil remedied in several instances, that the majority of failures result from ladies being placed on horses unsuited to their size, in the belief that all that is necessary, in such cases, is a very quiet animal. A lady of short stature is frequently mounted on a full sized horse, with whose lengthy action it is utterly impossible she can cope in any degree of comfort. On the other hand, a tall figure with a frame attenuated by sickness, is as often placed upon an undersized animal, whose comparatively short step renders the exercise to her, equally, if not still more distressing. Let them change horses and the effect is magical. Hence, in too many instances, it is not the advice of the physician that is unsound, but the judgment of those who provide horses for their patients.

In selecting a lady's horse, though beauty should not be disregarded, it ought to be only a secondary consideration, temper, action, training, and the breed, and conformation, of the animal being matters of far more importance. A horse cannot be too highly couraged for a lady, if he is temperate, while nothing can be more fatiguing and distasteful than riding a spiritless drone : he should be well-bred, and well-broken, with power and action to correspond. How often is it remarked of a horse, "that he is very pretty, but too slight, and only fit to carry a woman." A greater mistake than such an assertion can scarcely be made ; for, in proportion to her weight, more power is required for a lady, than for a gentleman : the

formation of the side-saddle, and the position of the rider's body upon it, causing the pressure upon the horse's back to be very severe. This is clearly seen in the tendency to chafe of the backs of horses much used with the side-saddle. Besides, a lady cannot command the same power, to recover a horse should he make a false step, nor to support him in any difficulty, and weak horses are all more or less prone to fall.

Again, as a general rule, ladies' horses do not last so long as those exclusively ridden by gentlemen, the difference being accounted for by the constant use of the off-leg in the canter. They consequently sooner or later become unsound on one side, and this must obviously occur at an earlier period to a weak-framed light limbed animal. But there is a still more annoying evil which results from this error. To the great vexation of a lady fond of riding, her horse is likely to be disabled half his time. This will frequently be the case with one that is not strong enough for his work; he will be lame, or his back unfit for the saddle, or he will be "amiss" and out of condition, at the very moment he is most required for the lady's pleasure.

Such animals, good looking as their owners may think them, are not worth keeping. It is better to dispense with a flowing mane, or a "well set-on tail," a bright and gay colour,—even that real charm, a pretty head!—in order to securing the more important and useful points; but, of course, when beauty can be united with these requisites

in a lady's horse, he is indeed invaluable. Most well-bred horses—except the unruly and vicious—of the requisite shape, power, and action, can be adapted to a lady's use by proper care, and preparation.

A perfect lady's horse, with all the necessary qualifications, is a rare, and highly to be envied, treasure. Some years ago, I had a dark chesnut, thoroughbred horse of great beauty, that had been most patiently, and elaborately, trained; and, of the many horses it has fallen to my lot to ride, it may well be believed that this was my greatest favourite.

“In truth he was a noble steed,”

With all the high attributes of stainless pedigree, and with action so perfect, as to charm alike the rider, and spectator, and so gentle, withal, as to yield to the most delicate hand.

If my fair readers will bear with me the while, I will endeavour to give them my opinion of what a lady's horse should be, by the best description of him which my pen and memory can afford.

“His head was short and broad, with a slight indentation of the face, that gave expansion to the nostrils, which at all times should be large, and fully developed, whilst no one could overlook the beauty of his symmetrically-formed, and gracefully-rounded, cheek. His ears were well set on, and of such size, and shape, as imparted a light,

and airy finish to his general contour. His head was placed on his neck as freely as possible, leaving space for the functions of the throat, whence it derived its elasticity, and power to bend in obedience to the rider's hand. His eye was soft, expressive, and only moderately prominent—an indication of his high breeding and docility of temper. His neck was by no means long, nor encumbered with muscle, but finely arched with—what is not at all times easily to be obtained—that peculiarly graceful curve, which doubtless had its origin in Eastern climes; and it grew into shoulders, not conspicuous for very high withers, at an angle of about forty-five degrees. These shoulders were deeply formed—a very prominent and essential point—were neither loaded at their points, nor set so far apart as to admit of that protuberance, which invariably impedes freedom of action. His depth of shoulder had its concomitant in depth of fore-rib, so essential in securing the lady's saddle, no less than ensuring power, and endurance, to sustain, and carry, the weight in its proper place. His legs were forward, as with such shoulders is universally the case, so that, in his trot, the knee could be just seen by his rider—the surest criterion of his correct action. His arms were long, and large, whilst the cannon bone, which forms the link between knee and fetlock, was broad, powerful, and short. His knees, with their opposite neighbours the houghs, were of great size, and enabled him to carry his rider with ease, and endurance. His pasterns were neither too long, nor too short, but of a medium length, and this imparted elasticity

to his action, and comfort to his rider. His foot was circular, and of a proportionate size, with the necessary adjuncts in their highest state of health—a point at all times so essential to preserving the foot in its primitive soundness. His back was rather short, the only fault a connoisseur could have discovered, as this defect generally detracts from the ease, and smoothness, of a horse's action. He had wide, well covered, hips, with long round quarters possessing great beauty down to his houghs, which like the stag's were inverted, angular, and placed well under him, whilst his tail high, and well set out, gave a most animated, and graceful, finish to the "*tout ensemble*."

However perfect the formation of an animal, much frequently remains to be done ere he can be properly styled a lady's horse; assuming that the ordinary means only have been used for breaking him, experience shows how unqualified he still is for the use of the side-saddle. Although, when he first comes from the dealer, he may be warranted "quiet to ride, and free from vice," and although his natural action may be faultless, he has yet much to learn, and the grave question then arises, how and by whom he shall be taught? The high spirit of a well bred English horse always renders the attempt to train him for a lady's use, a difficult task. The first great point in his education is to place him on his haunches, and this cannot generally be done without long continued, patient, exertion. A great mistake is frequently

made in desiring to accomplish this, too hastily, between the "pillars," instead of attaining the object by a series of long lessons given in the "longe," the dumb jockey being occasionally resorted to in his "box" for giving the fine finish to his mouth, which the extreme lightness of a lady's hand so peculiarly requires. Recourse must, still, only be had to these expedients, under the direction of some very competent person; for unless great caution and judgment are exercised, the most serious injuries will inevitably ensue.

The great difficulty still remains of selecting those to whose care he shall be consigned. His noble nature resents harsh usage, which either renders him intractable, and vicious, or destroys his fine spirit, and courage. Next to skill, gentleness and patience are the great qualities for the task, and they ever avail more towards breaking a high spirited, and oftentimes a vicious animal, than all the "*force contre force*" that can be devised. But, unfortunately the persons to whom he is entrusted in too many instances, from their coarse and brutal nature, think the only way to train is by harsh treatment, and such unsparing infliction of whip and spur, as makes the poor animal even tremble when he hears a loud voice, and start at the very sight and sound of a whip. There is of course no rule without its exception, and, as in human nature we meet with unruly tempers, so must we not be astonished to find them sometimes in the brute creation. Therefore, when a horse really requires correction, it ought not

to be withheld, but always administered, with judgment, coolness, and above all, without loss of temper.

“A man of kindness, to his beast is kind,
But brutal actions show a brutal mind:
Remember, he, who made thee, made the brute,
Who gave thee speech and reason, formed him mute;
He can't complain, but God's omniscient eye
Beholds thy cruelty—he hears his cry!
He was designed thy servant, not thy drudge,
But know—that his Creator is thy judge.”

BLOOMFIELD.

It is frequently asked whether a horse should be broken for a lady's use by a female, or by the more determined and masculine hand. This is a question that must principally depend, for its answer, on the temper and character of the horse, and on the skill and judgment of the breaker. Many are the occasions, when, that decision, which is naturally part of a man's hand, together with the full use of his limbs, which his seat on horseback permits, can alone accomplish the desired result. Again, the light hand of a woman frequently succeeds, where the more resolute one has failed.

It has been objected to professed female breakers, that in the pride, and consciousness, of their own power, they are sometimes apt to lean too much to the argument of force, and punish with great severity trifling faults, which far milder means would sufficiently correct. This mode of treatment is much to be regretted, not only as precluding the advantages to be derived from the delicacy of their

hands, and that docility in the horse which should result from this delicacy ; but as leading him ever after to associate the side-saddle, and habit-skirt, with punishment and suffering, and, from fear of chastisement, to be ready at all times to start aside on the slightest movement of the rider's hand.

Beautiful indeed is the sentiment of the poet, that

“Man should be taught, as if you taught him not.”

And if the exercise of this principle has been attended with favourable results in some unruly Lords of the Creation, who are yet endowed not only with intellect, but with all the qualities that elicit it, may it not, with almost equal assurance of success, be applied to an animal that has neither reasoning, nor reflective powers ?

The horse possesses great nervous sensibility, and is easily disposed to the various impressions of fear, affection, and dislike. In training him for a lady, the whip if used at all, as a means of punishment, should only be resorted to in cases of determined vice, and when every other expedient has failed. The corrections which have the greatest effect upon a horse, are such as are not severe, but those which thwart him in any act of disobedience, by first restraining him, and then compelling him to do directly the contrary. The intelligence of the animal, being thus acted upon, gives effect and

permanence to the lesson, and exempts the horse from any of the evil consequences so frequently resulting from ill timed severity.

An anecdote is related of a worthy yeoman, well known in the North of England as a successful breeder, and who has always rejoiced in being his own horsebreaker:—"That riding a colt one day about noon, the animal refused to turn out of the high road, that led to his own residence, into the direction he wished him to take. After, for some time, trying every act of encouragement, and kindness, to induce him to comply, but in vain, he quietly brought him to a stand-still on the spot, and opposed every attempt the horse made towards home. An hour having thus passed in simply resisting the animal's bent, a second essay was made to turn him, but again without effect. Observing a lad pass at the moment, he requested him, in true Yorkshire dialect, to go to his wife and tell her to send him his dinner. The repast duly arrived, and was eaten upon the animal's back. Another effort was then made, but an equally fruitless one. Accordingly the servant was desired to return home, and bring his master's supper in the evening, if he did not himself arrive meantime. Various other useless endeavours were subsequently made at intervals, till evening, and the supper really appeared. The meal dispatched, the messenger was again sent home for other provisions adapted to the midnight watch, and also for what, in Yorkshire, is sometimes called a "neet cap," but before he could return, the animal's obstinacy was exhausted, and he

became tractable, and obedient to his master's hand." Such were the means which this judicious trainer invariably employed, strictly prohibiting the use of either whip, or spur, and opposing every attempt of a young horse at disobedience, or vice, with patient determination, and kindness.

The eagerness with which horses, so trained, were sought for, and the almost fabulous prices they are said to have realized, proved the soundness of their owner's judgment, and rewarded him for his perseverance, and humanity.

The opinions so quaintly, yet so ably expressed, more than two hundred years ago, by that great, and witty, writer on the "Manège," the Duke of Newcastle, are so applicable to the present time,—when the fine breeding and high spirit of the modern English horse are so liable to be spoiled by brutality and impatience,—that I cannot forbear quoting a few passages upon this subject from his rare, and splendid work. "The understanding of a horse is infinitely degraded below that of a man by several, who, notwithstanding, by their actions, shew, that they believe the horse to be the more intelligent of the two. And indeed, a boy is a long time before he knows his alphabet, longer before he has learned to spell, and perhaps some years before he can read distinctly; and yet there are some people, who as soon as they have got upon a young horse, entirely undressed, or untaught, fancy, that by beating, and spurring,

they will make him a dressed horse, in one morning only. I would fain ask such stupid people, whether by beating a boy, they could teach him to read, without first shewing him his alphabet? Sure, they would beat the boy to death, before they would make him read. Don't, therefore, expect more understanding from a horse, than a man, since the horse is dressed in the same manner that children are taught to read. The horse is first taught to know, and, then, by frequent repetition, to convert that knowledge into habit. It is in like manner with what men learn, for example, a boy is a long time before he can play perfectly on the lute; but when he is become perfect, his fingers move, without his thinking, on every note, or every point. There is just as much to be said for a managed horse. It is true, that the hand and the heels are all that is required to make a perfect horse; but there are other things required to make him obedient to the hand and the heels." Again; "I have seen very few passionate horsemen get the better of a horse by their anger; on the contrary, I have seen the horse always get the better of them; and since the weakest understanding is always the most passionate, it is probable the horse will always outdo the man. In this art there should always be a man, and a beast, and not two beasts. Indeed, a good horseman ought never to put himself in a passion with his horse, but chastise him, like a kind of divinity superior to him. If the horseman spurs his horse rudely, the horse will answer in the same manner by flinging maliciously. Don't we see men in play give each other blows without being angry with

one another? but when they are in earnest, the least jestings occasion a duel. It is just the same with a horse; if the rider be angry with him, he will be malicious, but, otherwise, will take all in good part, and never be offended; so that patience is one means of dressing a horse. It is true that patience without knowledge will never do, as knowledge will seldom do without patience; you must, therefore, treat him gently, and not exert your full power; but the thing is difficult; for if he takes it into his head to rebel, you must either let him master you, or else venture a bold stroke to reduce him. If you let him master you, you have done with him; if he submits, you must alight that moment, and cherish him. If he does not yield, you had better stay till next morning, than spoil him by violence. Reduce him by degrees, mixing gentleness with helps and corrections. From hence you will learn how to fit a horse for use or for pleasure."

The breaker, then, whose assistance is sought, whether male or female, ought to be one, who, in addition to skill and judgment, has the most patience, and the greatest fondness for the horse.

The best ladies horses I have known were trained by gentlemen, whose superior intelligence, and love, for the animal, combined with a still greater charm, that of pleasing some fair relative or friend, for whom the task was undertaken, naturally gave them a great advantage over the class of men usually employed. And, for the

novelty of the habit-skirt, horses are easily prepared by the appendage of any similar drapery to the near side of the saddle.

In Virgil's time, nay indeed in Homer's, the art of breaking a horse was as well understood as in the present day, and the like means were employed. In the longe, we use a "mouthing bit," they did the same. The Romans, one called "*lupatum*," from its resembling the jagged teeth of a wolf, having doubtless to deal with a very different animal to the horse of modern times, for we rarely practice such severities. Virgil, in speaking of the mode of breaking a horse, tells us through his interpreter

"That when to four full springs his years advance,
Teach him to run the round, with pride to prance;
And, (rightly managed), equal time to beat,
To turn, to bound in measure, and curvet.
Let him to this with easy pains be brought,
And seem to labor, when he labors not;
Thus formed to speed, he challenges the wind,
And leaves the Seythian arrow far behind:
He scours along the field with loosen'd reins,
And treads so light he scarcely prints the plains."

A lady's hand, when well tutored, is always light, and elastic, and this, united to their gentleness, and the constant habit of petting their horses, frequently enables them to render perfectly quiet, even high-spirited animals, that men have sometimes failed to subdue. I once knew a lady who, for several years, rode a bay Arab horse, that became so restless the moment he was mounted by

a gentleman, as never to be induced to walk. In vain some of the best, and most skilled of hands, essayed the task, they all confessed their failure. And yet so perfect was the understanding between him, and his kind and gentle mistress, that no sooner was the latter in the saddle, and her soothing voice heard, than, with every appearance of satisfaction, and confidence, he would walk away in the most easy and delightful manner.

One other instance of the power of gentleness, I feel, will readily be pardoned me for introducing here. It is most exquisitely told, both in poetry and prose, and comes from the pen of an accomplished lady well known, and as highly prized by all whom good fortune has classed among her friends, and acquaintance; her whole life has been passed in the exercise of every Christian virtue, and her ministering spirit has been ever on the alert to find fresh objects for her sympathy, and beneficence. She writes thus; "I had a horse provided for me of rare beauty and grace, but a perfect Bucephalus in her way. She was only two generations removed from a splendid Arabian, given by the good old King to the Duke of Kent, when H. R. II. went out in command to Nova Scotia. This creature was not three years old, and, to all appearance, unbroke. Her manners were those of a kid, rather than of a horse; she was of a lovely dappled grey, with mane and tail of silver, the latter almost sweeping the ground; and in her frolicsome gambols she turned it over her back like that of a Newfoundland dog. Her slow step was a bound;

her swift motion unlike that of any other animal I ever rode, so fleet, so smooth, so unruffled. I know nothing to which I can compare it. Well, I made this lovely creature so fond of me by constant petting, to which I suppose her Arab character made her peculiarly sensitive, that my voice had equal power over her, as over my faithful docile dog. No other person could in the slightest degree control her. Our corps, the 7th Batt. of the 60th Rifles, was composed wholly of the elite of Napoleon's soldiers, taken in the Peninsular, and preferring the British service to a prison. They were, principally, conscripts, and many were evidently of a higher class in society than is usually found in the ranks. Among them were several Chasseurs and Polish Lancers, very fine equestrians, and as my husband had a Field Officer's command on detachment, and allowances, our horses were well looked after. His groom was a Chasseur, mine a Pole; but neither could ride 'Fairy' unless she happened to be in a very gracious mood. Lord Dalhousie's English coachman, afterwards, tried his hand at taming her, but all in vain. In an easy quiet manner, she either sent her rider over her head, or, by a laughable manœuvre, sitting down like a dog on her haunches, slipped him off the other way. Her drollery made the poor men so fond of her that she was rarely chastised, and such a wilful, intractable wild Arab it would be hard to find. Upon her I was daily mounted. Inexperienced in riding, untaught, unassisted, and wholly unable to lay any check upon so powerful an animal, with an awkward country saddle, which, by some fatality, was never well

fixed, bit and bridle to match, and the mare's natural fire increased by high feed, behold me bound for the wildest paths in the wildest regions of that wild country! But you must explore the roads about Anapolis, and the romantic spot called the 'General's Bridge,' to imagine either the enjoyment, or the perils of that my happiest hour. Reckless to the last degree of desperation, I threw myself entirely on the fond attachment of the noble creature; and when I saw her measuring with her eye some rugged fence or wild chasm, such as it was her common sport to leap over in her play, the soft word of remonstrance, that checked her, was uttered more from regard to her safety than my own. The least whisper, a pat on the neck, or a stroke down the beautiful face that she used to throw up towards mine, would control her; and never for a moment did she endanger me. This was little short of a daily miracle, when we consider the nature of the country, her character, and my unskilfulness. It can only be accounted for on the ground of that wondrous power which having willed me to work, for a time, in the vineyard of the Lord, rendered me immortal till the work should be done."

"I know by the ardour thou canst not restrain,
By the curve of thy neck, and the toss of thy mane,
By the foam of thy snorting, which spangles my brow,
The fire of the Arab is hot in thee now.
'Twere harsh to control thee, my frolicsome steed,
I give thee the rein—so away at thy speed;
Thy rider will dare to be wilful as thee,
Laugh the future to scorn, and partake in thy glee.
Away to the mountain—what need we to fear?
Pursuit cannot press on my Fairy's career.

Full light were the heel, and well balanced the head,
That ventured to follow the track of thy tread ;
Where roars the loud torrent, and starts the rude plank,
And thunders the rock-severed mass down the bank ;
While, mirror'd on crystal, the far shooting glow,
With dazzling effulgence is sparkling below.
One start, and I die ; yet in peace I recline,
My bosom can rest on the fealty of thine ;
Thou lov'st me my sweet one, and would'st not be free
From a yoke that has never borne rudely on thee :
Ah, pleasant the empire of those to confess,
Whose wrath is a whisper, their rule a caress."

The voice, soothingly applied, has always a peculiar charm for the horse, and his sagacity and retentive memory soon enable him to distinguish that of his rider. The Arab's whispering into the ear of his steed is quite proverbial, and there is no telling what virtue there may not be in the act, when one considers the faith, and affection, subsisting between him, and his rider. The fair equestrian cannot avail herself too much of this characteristic. Nothing is more likely to prevent an accident, or reassure her horse when taking fright from any cause, than the confidence he feels in the voice he is accustomed to hear, in tones of commendation and kindness.

"Soothe him with praise, and make him understand
The loud applauses of his master's hand."

DRYDEN.

Many a valuable animal is rendered unfit for a lady's use by the folly, or ill temper, of his groom. The culpable and prevalent habit of pinching, and teasing him in his stall, for mere amuse-

ment, cannot be too severely reprobated; for that which is at first, in the horse, merely an indication of the annoyance such wanton folly causes him, gradually becomes the expression of anger, and the fore-runner of some determined vice. A horse, subjected to such treatment, is very soon made unsafe; for, should he feel any inconvenience from the saddle being ill-adjusted, or the habit-skirt flapping with more than usual force against his side, or the whip thoughtlessly touching his quarters, he will immediately commence kicking to dislodge the cause, and if he once succeed in this, he will invariably have recourse to the same expedient, and the vice becomes confirmed.

Another serious evil frequently proceeds from the unnecessary roughness employed in dressing them. The skin of a well-bred horse is peculiarly delicate, and the torture experienced in being harshly rubbed and curried is very acute. A horse naturally becomes impatient under such usage, and an idle, ill-tempered, groom will then vent his rage upon the poor animal, for an expression of irritation, called forth by his own ignorance, and brutality. This is the principal cause of one of the most annoying faults a lady's horse can possess, that of "unsteadiness in mounting."

A humane, and intelligent, groom will always have regard to this peculiarity, and devoting more time and attention to the

animals under his care, will dress them with a lighter hand, and with such articles only as are suited to the sensitiveness and fineness of their skins; by these means he will not only always have his horses in the highest condition, and beauty, but his own kindness of disposition will greatly aid in rendering them tractable, and docile.

It is of the utmost importance that a lady's horse shall have regular exercise. A groom is apt to imagine that this may be dispensed with on the days when his mistress intends riding, whereas, it is on these occasions, that the previous exercise is doubly necessary. A lady's work is rarely sufficient to keep a well-bred horse, in high condition, under proper control. It is not only disagreeable, but dangerous for her, to ride an animal that, from want of sufficient exercise, is ready upon the least excitement to plunge, or bound, or endeavour to break away with her. This precaution is of still greater consequence in the case of a new purchase, till the temper and spirit of the animal is thoroughly ascertained. A horse will always perform his work more pleasantly to himself, as well as to his rider, if he has daily exercise; and his condition, and beauty, will also thereby be greatly improved. Remaining idle in the stable, for two or three days together, renders him fretful and impatient, and if he has a fine mouth, the least unsteadiness on the part of the rider makes him restive, and unruly. Moreover, if the stable, in which he is kept, be dark,

he will be apt to shy also, and start at the most trifling object. A lady's horse should have two hours walking exercise at least every morning, and, with a nice light hand in the groom, he will be all the better for a good smart canter. However well trained an animal may be, if he has not good shoulders, he will soon begin to hang upon the bridle, and unless his mistress is an expert horsewoman, he should at once be "well ridden up to the bit" for a few days, by a judicious masculine hand. Should this prove ineffectual, no better plan can be adopted than to send him back to his original exercise in the longe. With all the skill and care that may be employed, horses will yet be found with faults, and vices, that render them totally unfit for a lady's use. I have either read, or heard the remark, that the worse fault a horse can possess, is, "not to care about falling down." Sound as the axiom certainly is in its general application, it comes home with infinitely greater force to one that is intended for a lady; for, encumbered with her habit, she will find it difficult to extricate herself without danger, and impossible to do so without some injury, should he chance to roll over on the near side. In the latter case a lady is fortunate indeed, if she escape with only a sprained ankle, or knee, and, if thrown forward on the head of the saddle, still more painful results may follow. Therefore horses that have upright ill-formed shoulders, or who, from any other cause, are prone to this fault should always be rejected.

It has been well remarked by a talented, and experienced, writer, "that the horse has many excellent qualities, but he has likewise defects, and these occasionally amounting to vices. Some of them may be attributed to natural temper; for the human being scarcely discovers more peculiarities of habit, and disposition, than does the horse; the majority of them, however, as perhaps in the human being, are consequences of a faulty education. Their early instructors have been both ignorant, and brutal, and the horses have become obstinate, and vicious. Whether this appears in the form of kicking, or rearing, or plunging, or bolting, or in any way that threatens danger to the rider, or the horse, it rarely admits of cure. A determined rider may, to a certain degree, subjugate the animal; or the horse may have his favourites, or form his attachments, and with some particular person he may be comparatively, or perfectly manageable; but others cannot long depend upon him, and even his master is not always sure of him. It may be premised, as a rule that admits of very few exceptions, that he neither displays his wisdom, nor consults his safety, who attempts to conquer a restive horse."

Another writer justly observes: "From whatever cause the vicious habits of horses may originate, whether from some mismanagement, or from natural badness of temper, or from what is called in Yorkshire, a *mistetch*, whenever these animals acquire one of them, and it becomes in some degree confirmed, they very seldom,

if ever, entirely forget it. In reference to driving, it is so true, that it may be taken as a kind of aphorism, that if a horse kicks once in harness, no matter from what cause, he will be liable to kick ever afterwards. A good coachman may drive him, it is true, and make him go, but he cannot make him forget his vice; and so it is in riding, you may conquer a restive horse; you may make him ride quiet for months, but I affirm, that under other circumstances, and at some future opportunity, he will be sure to return to his old tricks again."

As prevention then is better than cure, or, rather, the attempt at cure, an animal addicted to some dangerous vice, or having any fault likely to render him unsafe, or unsound, should never be selected for a lady's horse.

THE LADY'S SADDLE AND BRIDLE.

"Arise, and saddle me my steed."—SCOTT.

"With bits and bridles taught the steed to bound ;
To turn the ring, and trace the mazy ground :
To stop, to fly, the rules of war to know ;
To obey the rider, and to dare the foe."

DRYDEN.

THERE can be few more effective implements of torture, both as regards the rider and the horse, than an ill made, and badly fitting, side-saddle. How frequently have ladies—especially adult novices—abandoned all idea of riding, in consequence of the extreme suffering endured from this cause, little thinking that it was an unnecessary evil, and one that might have been avoided, had the make, and adaptation, of the saddle to their figures been previously attended to. In like manner, many a poor animal has been condemned as unsuited to a lady's use, from restiveness, which, so far from having its origin in constitutional causes, or even in the flappings of the habit-skirt—to which last it has often been erroneously attributed—has arisen, solely, out of disregard to the correct fitting of the saddle.

Unless a side-saddle fits with great exactness, the horse's back will be severely galled. It should sit as evenly as possible, without pressing too closely on the withers, and be made so as in no way to bear upon, or interfere with, the freedom of the shoulders. It is advisable to have the "tree" made a little more open over the withers on the off side, to avoid the severe bearing on that part, which is caused by the natural inclination of a lady's saddle to the near side, more especially when the girths become loosened by the horse being some time in action. The "points" of the tree also ought to be made of sufficient length to secure the firm position of the saddle, the off point being somewhat the longer of the two.

If the tree is properly made, the adoption of shifting pannels cannot be too strongly recommended, for the many advantages they possess. Being attached, as these are, to the tree by rods, or by points and loops, instead of nails, the injury ensuing to the horse from the nails becoming occasionally displaced, is completely avoided. If, during a previous ride, the saddle has borne unduly upon any particular part of the back and withers, the evil may be easily guarded against, in future, by changing the pannels. The same saddle may also be adapted, by suitable pannels, to two or more horses. The pannels being easily removed for the purpose of drying, the early destruction of the saddle, from exposure to sun, or fire, or to injuries which it may receive from falls, in being carried from place to place upon such occasions, is entirely obviated. Thus, also, a lady

need never be deprived of her ride, by the necessity of having her saddle re-stuffed, as one set of pannels only may be sent away at a time for that purpose.

For the lady's comfort, length of saddle, in proportion to her figure, is indispensable. The platform should be as nearly on a level as possible, but the near side should always be stuffed higher than the off, to prevent the rider's sliding to the left, to which side, without great care, the peculiarity of the lady's seat on horseback, always inclines her. It is also advisable, to have it partially covered with doeskin, as the leather commonly used, becomes, in time, so smooth and polished, that, unless the saddle is extremely well made, a central position on it, is often maintained with great difficulty.

The near "head" or pommel must be carefully turned, and so stuffed as to admit of the knee's clasping it with ease, and comfort, as well as to avoid the severe chafing which inevitably results from these points not being properly attended to.

The off head is now sometimes dispensed with; it is not, however, without its advantages, and, if low enough not to interfere with the hands, and neatly turned outward, it is no less useful than ornamental. It undoubtedly assists in keeping the right leg steady, and enables a lady to raise herself in the saddle for the purpose of adjusting her habit.

The third pommel, or "leaping head," should be placed a short distance above the knee, according to the figure and stature of the rider, and should span, but not clasp, the leg tightly, otherwise it will impede the free action of the limb in trot, or canter. The leaping head is attached to the saddle by a screw, which forms the pivot on which it moves; this screw must always turn to the left, and not, as in the ordinary method, to the right, or the pressure of the leg will turn the pommel to the left, and unscrew it.

The leaping head, now so generally adopted, certainly possesses great advantages; for, if properly used, it gives immense security to the seat in all critical situations; and can in no way be objected to, provided, a lady has but first become a good horsewoman without it. Its chief disadvantage lies in the uninitiated rider's depending entirely upon it for security, instead of on her own skill in the management of herself, and horse, and so becoming quite at a loss what to do, should anything occur to deprive her of its help. I therefore strenuously recommend all novices who wish to become really good horsewomen, to dispense with it, until they have thoroughly learnt the value of the "hands," and themselves have attained that degree of proficiency, which enables them to sit closely, and maintain a true balance, without relying upon this artificial aid.

The stirrup should be fitted with that great improvement—the

balance strap—for, then, the foot once placed within it, the length can be adjusted from the off side, and be even regulated at pleasure by a lady herself. As a general rule, the “slipper stirrup” made the full length of the foot, will be found preferable to any other, if the iron is so turned that the purchase comes from the centre. It affords great power when its use is required, and combines, with this advantage, that of being a rest for the foot at all times.

The *bridle* for a lady's horse should be as neat, and simple, as possible. If a horse has a good, well turned head, he needs not the “foreign aid of ornament” to improve it; and if he has an ugly, ill-shaped one, an over-wrought, or fancy bridle will only render his ugliness the more conspicuous.

Except for the purposes of early tuition, the *plain snaffle* should never be seen in a lady's hand. If her horse has a mouth too fine to ride up to an ordinary bit, then the best that can be used, is the *double jointed port Pelham*, the lightest, and safest, with which a horse can be ridden.

In selecting a bit, although the “port” may be as simple as the nature of the horse's mouth will admit, the *cheek* should always be of sufficient length to induce him to bend more easily to the lady's hand.

As the *Hanoverian* bit is now doing duty as a "hard and sharp," and appears to be coming into vogue again, I advise my fair readers to be cautious in their use of it, unless they have very finished hands, and their steeds are, not only, thoroughly well broken, but, have, also, naturally good tempers. The continual use of the curb, except with a very light hand, destroys the sensitiveness of a horse's mouth, and makes him extremely heavy in hand. If he has a tender mouth, it renders him fretful, and impatient, causes him to throw his head about, and, frequently, to rear, and run back, to the great danger of the rider. The cheek of the bit too being curved, although it has a very neat appearance, does not admit of sufficient depth; for, rarely extending below the lower lip, the horse, instead of bending to the bridle, has often a disposition to resist it, by carrying his nose straight into the air, unless the rider have a perfect hand.

A bridle with "bit and bridoon" is best adapted to a lady's use; for, should she get into difficulty by her horse becoming intractable from dislike of the curb, or its being improperly used, she can immediately have recourse to the snaffle. In a long ride, too, a horse always goes more freely, and pleasantly, if occasionally released from the bit, and ridden upon the bridoon. I advise every lady to ride with double reins, to avoid the chance of an accident from a rein snapping, or a buckle giving way. Should there be only one rein, under such circumstances as with the "hard

and sharp," the rider is left entirely to the mercy of her horse, whereas, with bit and bridoon, she can still retain him, in perfect command, by the use of her second rein.

That diminutive, but important, adjunct to the bit,—the "lip-strap,"—ought, on no account, ever to be omitted; for, should a horse suddenly start off, and gather the cheek of the bit into his mouth, which is by no means an uncommon occurrence, in the absence of this useful appendage, the rider immediately loses all power of controlling him, and the worst of accidents may ensue.

On the uses of the bridle I have, I believe, communicated all the information that is instructive, and all that may be needed by my fair readers in any emergency; but, in conclusion, let me add, that the head and reins should always be flat, and made of the softest, and most pliant of leather.

The *martingale* is often, I believe, adopted for show rather than use. A lady's horse, properly broken, will bend to the hand without it, and, where not absolutely required, it is far better dispensed with. This remark applies particularly to the *nose* martingale; for, should a horse make a false step, half his power to recover himself is destroyed by the manner, in which his head is confined by it. The objection to the *ring* martingale is not so

great, but one of this kind can only be used on the bridoon rein, and is of very little service to a lady.

If a horse has acquired the habit of throwing up his head, or of endeavouring to "force the hand," a martingale may be used with some effect, but, even then, it only acts as a preventive for the moment, and not as a cure. This vice is engendered, in many instances, by an unsteady hand, by too severe a bit, or by that common evil, too tight a curb chain. In this case a light, and steady hand, with a bit adapted to the peculiarity of the horse's mouth, and a properly adjusted curb, will oftentimes effect a cure. If it arises from a horse having been imperfectly, or carelessly, broken, a permanent good may be generally ensured by subjecting him again, for a time, to the dumb jockey, and the longe.

The only one I ever met with that acted, at the same time, as a preventive, and a curative, was a *caresson* martingale. Some years ago, a thorough-bred mare of mine had a disagreeable habit of continually swaying, or, what is more commonly termed, "sawing," her head from side to side, whenever she was in action. Having no other fault, I was very anxious to break her of this troublesome propensity, but for some time tried in vain. A *caresson* martingale was at length suggested. The first day it was used, she began sawing as usual, the moment she started; but not liking the friction it caused across her nose, soon ceased; so inveterate, however,

was the habit, that it frequently returned during the ride, were it only for a few moments at a time. For several days she repeated her attempts in the same manner, but these proving ineffectual, the desire gradually subsided, and, after a few weeks, ceased altogether. At the expiration of three months, I discontinued the use of the cavesson, and found that a complete cure had been effected. I am not prepared to say, that this course will always be equally successful; but, from my experience on that occasion, I shall be inclined in similar cases,—with an animal of good and safe action,—to try the virtues of the cavesson again.

The construction of the saddle and bridle having been properly attended to, the next consideration is their being rightly placed upon the horse. It is highly desirable, that a lady be herself able to detect when her horse is improperly saddled, or bridled, as occasions may often arise, which deprive her of the services of her own groom, and leave her at the mercy of persons wholly unacquainted with a lady's saddle. When the horse is brought out previously to mounting, he should be turned with the off side to the lady, that she may the more easily observe, whether the saddle is correctly fitted on. It should be placed in the middle of the horse's back, about a hand's breadth from the shoulder, that it may not interfere with the action of the muscles. The girths should admit of the groom's finger being passed between them, and the horse; and the surcingle lie neatly over the girths, and

have an equal bearing with them. Too great attention cannot be paid to the length of the girths. If they are not properly secured, the saddle may turn round, and the life of the rider be endangered; if drawn too tight,—perhaps the more common fault,—the horse may plunge violently to relieve himself from them, and, in so doing, his rider, unless she is an expert, and practised horse-woman, may be unseated, and thrown.

These points having been ascertained, the horse may be turned again, but with his head towards the lady, that should he from high condition, or playfulness, be inclined to kick, she may be safely out of his reach.

In adjusting the bridle, the *throatlash* should be sufficiently long to fall about midway on the curve of the cheek-bone. The bridoon should hang easily in the horse's mouth, just touching the corners, but without wrinkling them. The curb-bit should be placed about an inch above the lower tusk, and the lipstrap, which is attached by a buckle to loops on each side of the cheek, be carried through a small ring in the curb-chain made to receive it, the curb-chain being allowed to hang loosely within the hollow of the lip. The great error in using a tight curb-chain should be carefully avoided. A horse will never carry his head in position, or go pleasantly, if the chain hurts him, and the most quiet animal, will, at some time or other, bring his rider into danger from this cause.

The torture a horse must endure from a side-saddle being improperly placed is inconceivable. We daily see, in our public rides, poor animals so obviously suffering from this cause, that it is impossible to help wondering how grooms riding behind them can be so ignorant, or wilfully blind, as not to perceive the fault. Their drooping heads, and restless shambling gait, bespeak their misery. Nothing but their own natural gentleness, and docility, prevents their more frequently becoming unruly, and vicious.

With a high-spirited, or imperfectly broken horse, this is very likely to occur, to the great annoyance, or danger, of his rider. His action also, from the pain he suffers, being rendered uncertain, becomes also unsafe. He is liable to fall at any moment, and his back and withers may be so severely galled, and wrung, as to unfit him for service for a long time.

MOUNTING.

"The ready palfreys stand arrayed."—SCOTT.

"To horse, to horse—urge doubts to those that fear."

A LADY, previously to mounting, should walk up to her horse's head, let him see her, hear her voice, and should pat him. It should also be her rule to approach him sufficiently in front, never from behind, lest his natural nervousness cause him to kick. Slight as these preliminaries may appear, they are far from unimportant.

If possible, two persons ought to be in attendance on a lady whilst mounting, the one to hold the horse, the other to assist her to the saddle.

The former, whom I will suppose to be the groom, should stand in front of the horse's head, with a hand on each side of the bridle close to his mouth, in order to keep him steady; for, should the horse move backward, or forward, as the lady is in the act of vaulting into the saddle, he not only makes the vaulting exceedingly awkward, but perhaps dangerous, as she is almost sure to miss the



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M. C. C. C. C. C.

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spring, and thus renders the mounting tedious. Many horses are apt to move to the off side, and, to an inexperienced rider, this may be still more disagreeable; for, the lady standing on one leg, and holding the pommel with the right hand, may fall, if she does not immediately leave her hold.

The best plan that can be adopted with a horse in the habit of moving aside on being mounted, is to place him, where convenient, against a wall, or paling, or by the side of another horse, which is still better, for horses are always more quiet in company.

The second person in attendance, whether esquire, or groom, should put the stirrup across the horse's neck, in front of the saddle, to prevent its striking against the lady's feet in mounting. Then, having adjusted the reins of the bridoon to an equal length, and placed them in her hand, should stand with his left shoulder in front of the horse's shoulder, so as to face the lady, and, uniting his hands, by joining the fingers one within the other, should stoop to receive her foot in them.

Having taken the reins from the attendant, by placing the forefinger of the right hand between them, the lady should stand as close to the animal as convenient, and place her right hand containing the whip on the left hand pommel, then put her left foot, free from the habit-skirt, full into the attendant's hands, drop the

habit, which till this moment she retains in her left hand, place that hand upon his right shoulder, (*see illustration,*) and vault into the saddle, assisted by her hold on the pommel, and the pressure on his shoulder, most attentively straitening the left knee, and springing from the right instep. All this must be done at the same moment, greatly aided of course by the assistant, who raises his hands as she springs. He must, however, be careful not to move till then, that the action be simultaneous.

The spring must be regulated by the height of the horse; for, if the lady vault too high, the attendant in quickly raising his hands at the same time, may overbalance her, and expose her to the risk of a fall on the other side.

Before making the spring, the lady should take care that, the person, who assists her in mounting, has not placed his foot upon her habit, which may not only tear it, but check her, and, also, that the whip, which she holds in her right hand, does not touch the horse, for fear of startling him.

With a heavy, or inactive rider, another method may be adopted. The position of the lady remaining as before, the attendant must place himself at the lady's side, with his face towards the horse's head, and stooping down, receive her foot in his hands, under his right arm. Thus the attendant stands closer to the lady, so that

the weight, borne more centrally, and perpendicularly, in his hands, increases his power of lifting her to the saddle.

When only one person is in attendance, the lady, prior to mounting, should observe that the reins are not taken up too short, lest the horse run back, and become unsteady as she is vaulting into the saddle; and, also, that they are perfectly even, so as to produce an equal feeling on the horse's mouth.

As soon as seated, let the lady put her right knee over the pommel, taking care that the habit is sufficiently loose, and even, round the knee, not to impede its going well home into the saddle, nor to allow of any space under it. The foot is then placed in the stirrup. If the back part of the habit require any arrangement, the lady must raise herself in the saddle, by straitening the left knee, and, drawing herself forward by holding the off pommel with the right hand, with the left, arrange the habit to her satisfaction. When a good seat on horseback has been attained, and the lady does not encumber herself with underclothing, this arrangement will rarely be necessary, but, if so, it can be made equally well, perhaps better, while the horse is in motion.

And now that she has overcome the doubt expressed in Sir Walter Raleigh's lines—

“Fain would I climb,
But that I fear to fall,”

the fair rider is, for the first time, on horseback, looking gaily down, and rejoicing in the prospect of equestrian triumphs.

Her next attention must be paid to the length of the stirrup. Some ladies prefer riding with a short one, which is obviously an error, for it invariably either causes cramp, or makes the rider sit too much over to the right, and present a very awkward appearance. Too long a stirrup is equally bad, in its causing the body to lean too much to the left, and straining the foot in the endeavour to retain it.

The steadiness of the seat depends greatly upon the stirrup's being adjusted to the proper length. To ascertain this, the knee must be only slightly bent, not more so than enables the rider, by leaning with the right hand upon the pommel, to raise herself up in the saddle without any strain to the instep.

The lady has now only carefully to adjust the reins, preparatory to commencing her ride.



J. Bucknill del. E. Momm. lith.

DISMOUNTING

DISMOUNTING.

"For better loves the lady bright
To sit in liberty and light."

SCOTT.

WITH many ladies, mounting is not half so serious an affair as dismounting. The dislike to being lifted from the saddle, in a groom's arms, and the "*exposé*" attendant upon derangement of dress, which so frequently occurs in this way, naturally cause a feeling of nervousness.

But, in reality, dismounting, if properly directed, is by far the more simple of the two, and gives not the slightest occasion for the annoyances I have alluded to. A novice should not dismount, if possible, without the assistance of two persons—one exclusively, as in mounting, to hold the horse's head and keep it perfectly steady, the other to assist the lady in the descent.

It may not always be convenient to have two in attendance, and if only one be present, he should hold the bridle with his left hand, as close to the horse's mouth as possible, and advance at full arm's length so as to face the lady. The latter, as soon as

her horse is held, should disengage her foot from the stirrup, —which the attendant puts over the front of the saddle, as in mounting, lest it catch in the habit,—drop the reins gently on the horse's neck, take her handkerchief from the pocket of the saddle, and pass it to her left hand. With this hand she must also free the side of the habit-skirt from her under-clothing, taking hold of it at arm's length, and turning a small portion of it over the thumb, in order to leave the rest of the hand at liberty; lift the right knee over the pommel, which is never done till she is just about to alight, place her right hand with the whip on the near pommel, as in mounting, (*see illustration*) and the left, which retains the habit, on the attendant's right shoulder, who, at this moment, advances a step nearer, and slide down, dropping a slight curtsey, to prevent any jar to the frame, and always retaining her hold on the pommel, till safely landed. The attendant assists her in the descent by bending with her.

Thus the rider will perceive that, when she gains *terra firma*, her feet are perfectly free from the habit, which, at the same time, falls evenly with her, while, by retaining hold of it with her left hand, she needs only to gather it up on the right side, as described in the proper method of holding the habit, to be able to walk away both easily, and gracefully.

Ladies, who use the "leaping head," should be careful to clear

the habit-skirt from it, before they alight, and this may be easily done, by slightly shifting the seat, after removing the knee from the pommel.

Mounting and dismounting naturally appear complicated, and difficult, at first, but a few well directed essays will render both extremely simple, and easy.

It is most essential that the male friends and relatives of ladies who ride, exercise the duties of the "*Cavalier Servente*" in these cases; for, surely, gentlemen must find it extremely unpleasant, when accompanying a lady on horseback, not to be able to assist her to, and from, her saddle, should she happen to pay a visit during the ride. Of the few gentlemen who possess this desirable knowledge, some use only one hand in placing a lady on horseback, but, if I may be allowed to suggest an improvement, it is that of using both. In the first place, the weight is less difficult to sustain, and, in the next, the interlacing of both hands prevents that awkwardness,—which unavoidably arises from using only one,—of not lifting the lady perpendicularly to her saddle, for, in straitening the knee for the spring, she invariably pushes the hand away from her. Not only is this completely avoided by the use of both hands, but, by these, she is also guided, more unerringly, to her seat.

I cannot allow this opportunity to pass, without expressing, in the name of all riders of my own sex, an earnest desire that the

courtesies and necessary knowledge of the "*squire aux dames*" be more sedulously cultivated by the young cavaliers of the present day. The "*petits soins*" are, admittedly, well attended to in the ball-room, but should not be confined to it. The accomplishments of a polished gentleman are visible on every occasion that calls for them, and can never surely be more effectively displayed, nor more highly appreciated, than in attention to all that concerns the equestrian promenades of the fair. Whither indeed is chivalry fled, that she consigns to a groom, services, to which gentlemen can most becomingly aspire, and, which performed by them, are sure of being gratefully and graciously received?



J. Fordall, del. E. Morin, sc.

Day & Son, Lith to The Queen.

THE SEAT.

THE SEAT.

"The rider sat erect and fair."—SCOTT.

VARIOUS, and, often, painful to the eye, are the positions, in which some of our fair equestrians fain would *grace* the parks. Yet, in most of these instances it is instruction, only, not courage, or personal grace, that fails of making the chief portion of them elegant riders.

It has long been matter of surprise, that of the many ladies who annually *learn*, as it is termed, to ride, few, comparatively, ever acquire either an easy, or a graceful seat on horseback. The primary cause of this evil is want of elasticity in the figure from the hips upwards, and though this may be partially traced to tight lacing, it is principally to be ascribed to an inefficient, and hasty, mode of tuition. Perhaps, for the first time in her life that she mounts, a lady is hurriedly placed on horseback, her hands are immediately encumbered with the reins of a double bridle, and with the general instruction to "sit back and hold up her head," she is left to her own guidance. In this novel position, a slight feeling of nervousness naturally comes over her, and the moment the horse is in motion, especially if he toss his head, or become in the slightest

degree unsteady—a very likely incident through her own awkwardness—her hands are stiffened upon the reins, and a peculiar rigidity pervades her whole frame. By degrees, the nervousness wears off, but, in the majority of instances, this rigidity to a great extent remains, and creates at one time or another, every form of mal-position, in the saddle, which the body is capable of assuming.

When a novice is seated for the first time on horseback, the reins ought not to be immediately placed in her hands. The animal should be led for some time by an attendant; she will thus be at once divested of fear, will gradually find her true position in the saddle, and, her hands being at liberty, her body will be entirely unconstrained, and yielding easily, and naturally, to the movements of the horse, will thus lay the foundation of that ease, and pliancy, which is absolutely indispensable in riding.

To obtain a correct position, a lady must take her seat just so far forward in the saddle, as is consistent with perfect ease, and comfort, and with the full power to grasp the pommel firmly with the right knee. She should sit erect, and perfectly square to the front, placing herself so, as to look directly between the horse's ears.

The seat ought also to be so taken, that the weight of the body fall exactly in the centre of the saddle, without any bearing in the stirrup, and, it should be ever remembered that, on preserving this

central position depend ease, and firmness of seat, both to rider, and horse.

The left leg should hang freely from the hip-joint, the knee slightly bent, and the part from the knee falling straight down by the horse's side, with the foot resting steadily in the stirrup, and the toe pointing towards the horse's shoulder.

The right leg, from the hip to the knee, should be kept firmly down in the saddle, as far as is possible, without moving; the knee must grasp the pommel firmly, and the leg from the knee to the foot, with the heel drawn somewhat backward, must lie close to the fore flap of the saddle.

The head, though erect, should be perfectly free from constraint, in order to be ready for all the natural motions that it may make in turning to one side or the other.

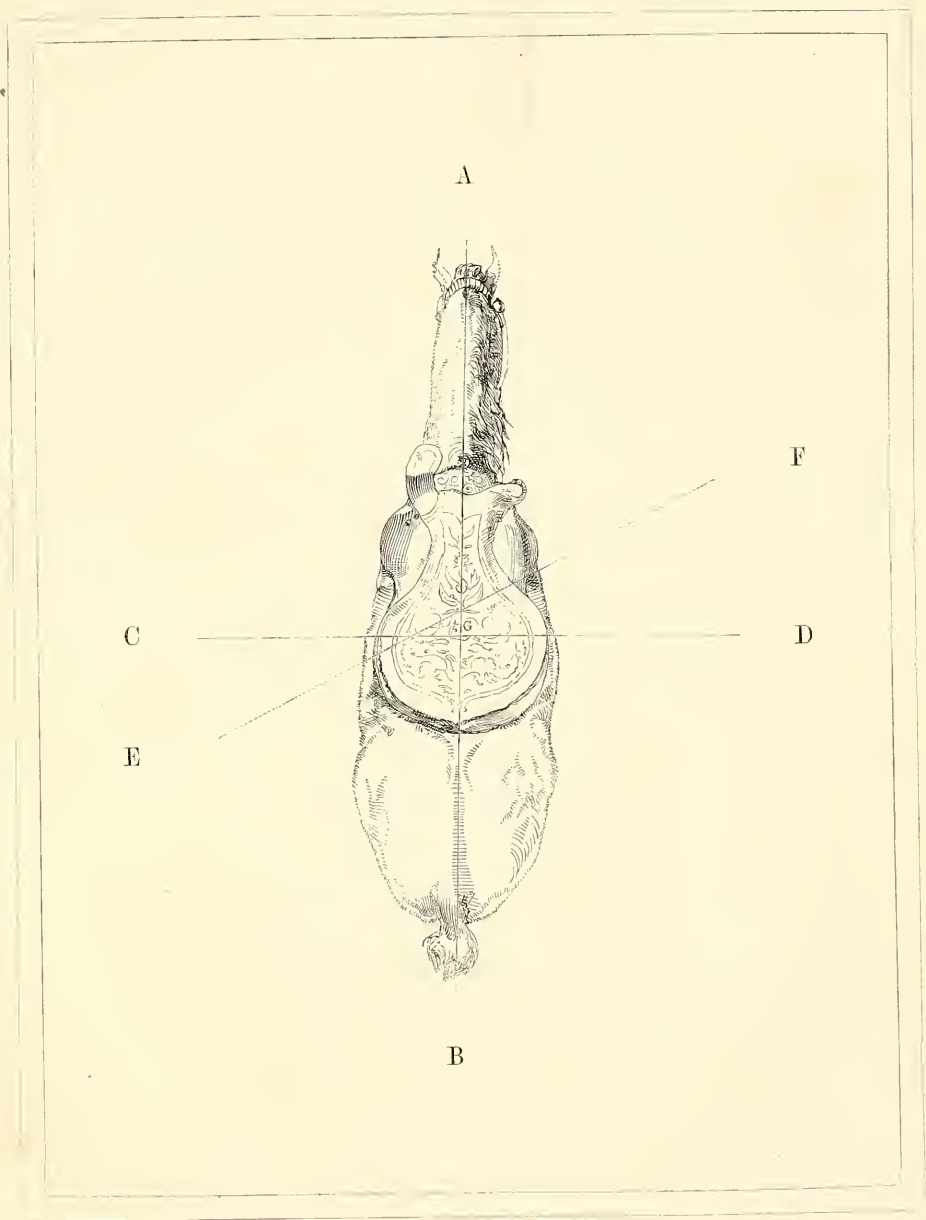
The shoulders are to be perfectly square, with a slight backward inclination for expanding the chest, and producing a graceful bend in the back, such as is observed in waltzing.

Let the upper part of the arms hang perpendicularly from the shoulders, the elbows be bent, and lightly closed to the hips, with the little fingers on a line with them.

The hands, with the wrists rounded a little outwards, should be held about three inches from the body, and about four inches from each other, with the thumbs opposite. When the horse is advancing straightforward, the hands should be on a level; but, when turning to the right or left, the inward hand, that is, the hand on the side to which the turn is being made, must be a little lower than the outward one.

Referring to the illustration of the side-saddle on a horse's back, the fair reader will observe the exact position she should constantly maintain, particularly as to *squareness* when in the saddle; for on this depends the *union*, so absolutely necessary, between the rider, and the horse.

The letter G represents the position of the seat in the saddle, and C D the line of the shoulders, the body being supposed to be perfectly upright, with the face in a direct line with the letter A. In this case, it will be seen that the seat is taken upon that part of the horse, which, as he moves, is the centre of motion, and from which, consequently, any weight would with the greatest difficulty be shaken. In this central position, by the natural elasticity of the upper part of her body, the rider can accommodate herself with comfort, and safety, to the various paces, and movements of the horse, so as, upon all occasions, to be in unity with him, and as firm, and easy, as though they were one body.



If, instead of sitting squarely from C to D, the rider take her seat obliquely from E to F,—a too common practice, and one which will be better understood on referring to *Illustration A*,—the union between herself, and the horse, will be destroyed. In such a position the balance cannot possibly be preserved, and she becomes liable on any sudden, or unexpected, movement of the horse, to fall backwards, or forwards, according to the side on which she most preponderates.

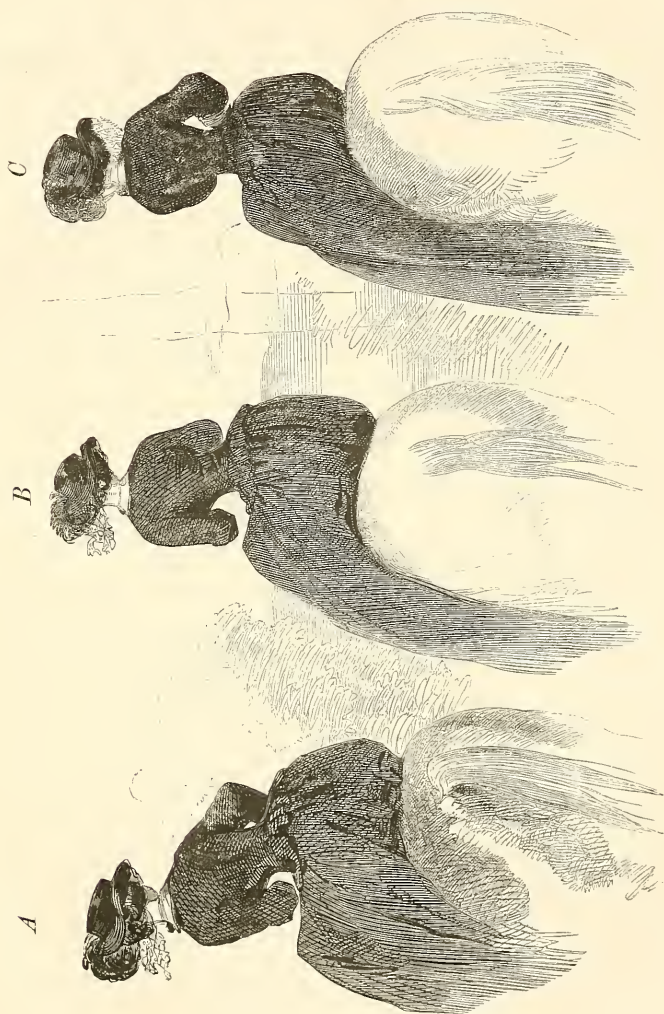
Again, if the upper part of her body incline forward to letter A, she becomes disunited from her horse, and her position extremely insecure; but if, on the other hand, that part of the body is kept perfectly upright, or inclined slightly back to letter B, she will be united to her horse, and firmly seated in the saddle.

Inclining the upper part of the body forward is a very general fault, and one which is frequently resorted to by timid, and inexperienced riders, from a false notion of security. Nothing, however, can be more dangerous, for, should a horse put his foot upon a rolling stone, whilst the lady is leaning forward, a fall is almost certain. And, indeed, she herself is instrumental in accomplishing this, for, though the horse might easily recover himself, if quickly assisted by his rider, he can scarcely be expected to do so, when her entire weight is suddenly thrown upon his shoulders, by the impetus to her already stooping figure given by his stumbling.

It is a common error for ladies to sit too much over to the right, and then, in attempting to balance themselves, to lean the shoulders to the left, the head being brought to the right by an inelegant bend in that direction (*Illustration B*). This is frequently caused, as before observed, by the stirrup's being too short. Sitting too much to the left, and bearing the weight improperly in the stirrup (*Illustration C*), is a still more frequent fault, and one into which, from the peculiarity of the lady's seat on horseback, a novice, unless well instructed, is very apt to fall. It sometimes arises from too great length of stirrup, but, more frequently, from the prevailing apprehension—that exists in the minds of timid riders—of falling on the off, rather than on the near, side.

In both these positions, the rider becomes disunited from her horse, her seat insecure, and the properties of the hands, and the aids of the body, are completely destroyed. The inclination of the body to the left, naturally carries the hands to the same side, and takes away all power over the horse, and the body being out of balance, cannot accompany his movements, nor aid in giving him correct action.

Frequently in the desire of bringing back the hands to their proper position, the elbows are shifted to the right, the right one being forced outward, and the shoulder on the same side unduly elevated, imparting a most awkward, and—a short distance off—even deformed, appearance to the rider (*Illustration C*).



The near pommel properly used, is the lady's principal support, and dependance, on horseback. By the right knee being passed over, it, and the leg from the knee downward pressed against the fore-flap of the saddle, the pommel is grasped, and the rider well secured in possession of her seat. Great care, however, must be taken to avoid the too common error of hanging by the pommel, else the body will lose its central position, and slip to the near side, throwing its weight principally upon the stirrup. This position is equally dangerous to the rider, and painful to the horse, for the weight being all borne on the near side, the saddle is apt to shift in the same direction, and severely to wring his back and withers.

The position of the leg and foot in the stirrup should be as easy as possible. If the foot be forced outward in an awkward manner, it will incline the body too much out of the balance, and render the seat tottering, and uncertain, while the leg itself will be fatigued, and cramped, by constant tension of the muscles. If the stirrup foot be kept too far back, and pressed under the horse's side, it will draw the rider's body forward on the horse's shoulders, and her position will be alike inelegant, and insecure. For escaping these evils, the inside of the knee must be kept against the saddle, with the toe pointing towards the horse's shoulder ; at the same time it is understood, that the leg ought not to be pressed close to the horse, except when used as an aid, but should descend easily by his side, and not bear stiffly against it.

A novice should endeavour to acquire a steady seat, without placing any dependance upon the stirrup, or taking any assistance from the reins—with these latter she should merely feel, and support the horse, but never hold on.

Her practice should also be riding in circles to the right, sitting upright, and directing the eye, and body, to the horse's nose, which, in this exercise, is more or less bent within. Let her begin first with a walk, then proceed to a slow trot, and increase the action in proportion as she gains firmness, and freedom, in the saddle. She will thus escape the propensity, so common among ladies, of leaning to the near side of the horse. When, in a smart trot, the freedom of leaning to the right has been acquired, so that the feet of the horse on the off-side may be seen, there is reason to suppose that the seat is correctly established.

The balance so essential to the ease, and security, of the rider, can only be attained by practice ; it has been justly said to consist “ in a foreknowledge of what direction any given motion of the horse would throw the body, and a ready adaptation of the whole frame to the proper position, before the horse has completed his change of attitude or action ;—it is that disposition of the person, in accordance with the movements of the horse, which preserves it from an improper inclination to one side or the other, which even the ordinary paces of the horse in the trot or gallop will occasion.”

To preserve the balance in riding, the body must incline in the same direction as the horse's legs, and thus the equilibrium may be maintained in as many different positions, as the horse has capacity for working in.

When the horse is standing still, or merely walking straight-forward, the body should be preserved in the simple position already described. As the horse moves into a trot, the body must accommodate itself to the change of action, the whole figure being extremely pliant, and accompanying all the movements of the horse.

In turning briskly round a corner, or riding in a circle, the body should lean back rather more than in the walking position, and in the same degree that the horse bends, or leans inwards, must the body lean in the same direction, and proportion, else the balance will be lost.

In leaping, and all violent movements of the horse, except rearing, the body has chiefly to be kept back; should the horse become restive, or shy at any object, and either start aside, or wheel suddenly round, the body with an easy pliancy must adapt itself to his movements, and turn, or swerve with him. As a further assistance, the eye should be directed to the horse's ears, and the body will go with them; but, if the eye be directed to the object he shies from, the balance will be lost, and the rider be in danger of falling off on the side from which the horse starts.

The movements of the rider are ever to harmonize with those of the horse ; thus, when the horse is at liberty, and disunited, then the rider in like manner sits at her ease, and may be said to be disunited also ; and as she begins to collect and unite her horse, so she collects and unites herself : when a rider is pressing her horse to the union, and drawing from him his proudest, and most animated, action, then must her own bearing be the extreme of elegance, and her animation in the same proportion to that of the horse.

THE REINS.

“Where every horse bears his commanding rein.”—SHAKESPEARE.

HAVING now fairly seated the lady in her saddle, I shall proceed to place the reins of government in her hands, with full instructions how to use them, so as to ensure confidence in herself, and willing obedience in her gallant steed.

There are various methods of holding the reins, according to the style of riding, the design of the rider, and the propensities, and peculiarities of the horse.

The bridles most in use have two reins; but it is advisable for learners to practise with one first, as some slight confusion will otherwise be created with beginners. The bridle, originally practised with, should always be a snaffle, the hand at first being too harsh for the curb. In this case the reins ought generally to be separated, passing into the hands between the third and fourth fingers, and out of them over the fore-fingers, where they are held down by the thumbs.

As soon as a competent knowledge of the operation of the hand has been acquired, the novice may be instructed to ride with bit and bridoon.

She must first be informed that, the upper rein belongs to the bridoon, or, what is more commonly termed, the snaffle, and the lower one to the bit, or curb. The former rein is generally distinguished, when both are held in the hand, by a buckle, used to unite it in the middle; while the latter is fastened in the centre by a sewing.

The double reins may be held in either of the following modes.

In the first, the bit rein is taken up at the sewing by the right hand, within the bridoon rein, and drawn through on each side of the little finger of the left or bridle hand, until there is a light and even feeling of the horse's mouth, it is then turned over the first joint of the fore-finger on the off side. The bridoon rein is next taken up at the buckle, under the left hand, and laid smoothly over the left bit rein, leaving it sufficiently loose to hang in a slight curve on each side of the horse's neck. The thumb is then placed firmly upon both reins to prevent their slipping.

In this case the bridoon becomes a superfluous rein, the feeling upon the horse's mouth being made entirely with the bit rein.

In the second, the bridoon rein is taken up by the right hand, and drawn through on each side of the second finger of the bridle hand, till the horse's mouth can be felt, when it is turned over the first joint of the fore-finger on the off side. The bit rein is next taken up, and drawn through on each side of the little finger of the bridle hand, till there is an equal, or nearly equal length, and feeling, with the bridoon, and then laid smoothly over the bridoon rein, with the thumb, firmly placed upon both, to keep them from slipping.

In this latter case, the feeling upon the horse's mouth may be made principally with the bridoon; at the same time that a slight pressure of the little finger will bring the bit into play, and the turning the lower part of the hand upwards, towards the body, call forth its full power.

Besides holding the reins properly, it is necessary to become expert in separating, shifting, and adjusting them, which things, trifling as they may appear, it is astonishing how few ladies really understand. These exercises should be practised on every convenient opportunity, until the novice can perform them cleverly, without stopping the horse, altering his pace, or even looking to the hands.

Separating the reins is, on occasions, found of material

advantage. Two hands can effect more than one; and, consequently, when a horse refuses obedience to one hand, the rider should use both. It is rarely necessary to take more in the right hand than one rein, which, in a single reined bridle, is not to be mistaken; but, when riding upon both reins of a double bridle, the right rein of the *bridoon* should be taken in the right hand in the following manner:—The back of the right hand is turned upwards, and the first three fingers placed over the bridoon rein, so that the rein may be received between the little and third fingers, the end is then turned over the fore-finger with the thumb placed upon it, and the thumb carried upward in the same manner as in the bridle hand.

Another method of separating the reins may be occasionally resorted to, when more than ordinary power or precaution are required: the bridoon rein passes between the third and little finger of each hand, and the bit rein outside the little fingers, the ends turned over the fore-fingers with the thumbs closed upon them. Here, again, the feeling upon the horse's mouth may be made chiefly with the bridoon, till the use of the bit is called for, in which latter case, it can be brought into full force by turning the little fingers upward towards the body.

Should the left hand become cramped, or tired, or be required at liberty for the arrangement of the habit, or for any other

purpose, the reins must be shifted from the left hand to the right.

When riding with a single bridle, or upon one rein only of a double bridle, the method of shifting the reins, from the left hand into the right, is as follows:—The thumb of the left hand is turned towards the right, the fore-finger of the right hand placed downward between the reins, in the place of the little finger of the left hand, and the reins laid smoothly through the right hand. By this means the fore-finger separates the left rein from the right, and the superfluous reins hang downward through the hand, the thumb pressing the left rein between the first and second joint of the fore-finger.

If the reins are shortened by this method of shifting, it is easy to let them slip to their proper length, but whenever they are too long, it requires the assistance of the other hand to shorten them. For shifting them again into the left hand, all that is needed is to place the left hand over the right, and put the little finger downward between the left and right reins, placing them smoothly through the hand, and letting the ends hang over the fore-finger as at first.

When riding upon both reins of a double bridle, as in the manner last described, the bridoon rein being separated by the second, and the bit rein by the little finger of the left hand, both are shifted into the right, by turning the left thumb towards the

right, and putting the fore-finger of the right hand into the place of the little finger of the left, the second finger of the right into the place of the third finger of the left, and the third finger of the right into the place of the second finger of the left, the reins being placed smoothly through the right hand with the ends hanging down, and each rein separate. In shifting them again to the left, the fingers return to their former places.

In shifting the reins to the right, the right hand must always be placed over the left, and in re-shifting them to the left, the left hand be placed over the right.

As the reins ought to be held as easy, and pliant, as circumstances will admit of, they will, especially with novices, imperceptibly slip, and, therefore, frequently require adjusting. To effect this expertly, the ends of the reins that hang over the fore-finger of the left hand should be taken altogether into the right, the fingers of the left hand opened sufficiently to admit of their slipping up and down the reins smoothly, and freely; the right hand supporting the horse, till they are adjusted to the required length, and the fingers of the left hand closed upon them, the ends are then turned over the fore-fingers as before. In this manner both reins are altered together.

To shorten the bit rein, and lengthen the bridoon, the end of the bit rein that hangs over the fore-finger has to be taken up by

the right hand, the whole of the reins to be slipped too long, and the left hand then slid down the reins; the centre of the bit rein remaining firmly in the right hand, and the fingers feeling whether both bit reins are of equal length, and operation, before the left hand closes upon them, or the right hand quits them. In like manner, to shorten the bridoon and lengthen the bit, the right hand is applied to the end of the bridoon that hangs over the fore-finger, both reins are slipped too long, and the left hand is then slid down them as before.

To shorten any one rein, the right hand is applied to that part of it, which hangs over the fore-finger, so as to draw it through the left hand to the required length.

When the reins are separated, and require adjusting, the hands are brought together to assist each other, or, the right rein or reins may be restored to the bridle hand, and the whole adjusted together in the manner already described, and then separated again as before.

These manipulations of the reins may all be practised with excellent effect at home, by attaching tape reins, representing bit and bridoon, to an *elastic* band, about four inches in depth, which may be fastened to any fixed piece of furniture. The elasticity of the band will also give the novice a good idea of the alternating action of the horse's mouth upon the hand, and of the hand upon the mouth.

THE POSITIONS OF THE HANDS.

"Practised alike to turn, to stop, to chase,
To dare the fight, or urge the rapid race."

POPE.

THERE are four motions requisite in guiding the horse, viz:—enabling him to advance, turning him to the right, turning him to the left, and compelling him to go backward. There are, consequently, five different positions for the hands; the first being that general one, from which the other four proceed.

THE FIVE POSITIONS WHEN THE REINS ARE SEPARATE.

When a rein is held in each hand, the first position is that which has been already described, viz.:—the hands are held about three inches from the body, and about four inches apart, in line with each other, with the thumbs uppermost, and the little fingers on a line with the elbows.

The second consists of a slight yielding of the hands, by which the horse is enabled to advance.

The third shortens the right rein, by turning the little finger of the right hand upwards, towards the waist, and inclines the horse to the right.

The fourth shortens the left rein, by turning the little finger of the left hand upwards, towards the waist, and inclines the horse to the left.

The fifth shortens both reins evenly, by turning the little fingers up at the same moment, and stops the horse; while, by bending the hands towards the body, this position compels him to go backward.

WHEN BOTH REINS ARE HELD IN ONE HAND ONLY, THE FIVE
POSITIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:—

In the first case, the bridle hand is held about three inches from the body, in such a manner that, the joint of the little finger is upon a right line with the tip of the elbow; the wrist is sufficiently rounded to place the knuckles directly above the neck of the horse, and the nails exactly opposite the body, with the little finger rather nearer to the latter, than the others.

In the second, the hand is slightly yielded, by turning the thumb downward until the knuckles come uppermost, and the nails are

over the horse's neck. By this simple motion, the reins are sufficiently relaxed to permit the horse to advance.

In the third, the nails, which, in the first position are exactly opposite the body, are turned downward, the little finger is carried to the left, and the back of the hand brought upward. This movement, which is effected in an instant, causes an extra bearing on the right rein, and turns the horse to the right.

In the fourth, the hand quits the first position, the nails are turned upward, and the little finger, pressing the left rein, is brought into the right. By this motion an extra bearing is produced on the left rein, and the horse is turned to the left.

In the fifth, the nails leaving the first position are turned quite upwards, with the knuckles towards the horse's neck. This movement causes also an extra bearing upon both reins, and stops the horse; while, by bending the wrist, it compels him to go backward.

Except it be with a horse that is well trained, or one that works well up to the bridle, the effect of the positions, when the reins are held in the bridle hand only, cannot always be depended upon, with the same certainty, as when both hands are employed.

The novice having made herself mistress of these different

positions, must learn to pass from one to another with readiness, and order. Unless the elbows are kept perfectly steady, they give an uncertainty, and fickleness, to the hand, which is sufficient to ruin it for ever.

When the reins are held in the bridle hand only, the rider may allow the right arm to fall easily by her side, or carry it in any manner that may be convenient to her; but she must studiously avoid assuming anything masculine, and affecting, or what is still worse, imitating, any peculiar, and unusual style.

THE HANDS.

"He ruled his eager courser's gait;
Tried him with chastened fire to prance,
And, high curvetting, slow advance."

SCOTT.

"The riders bend
O'er their arched necks with steady hands, by turns
Indulge their speed, or moderate their rage."

SOMERVILLE.

THE seat obtained, and reins adjusted, we now come to the great secret, wherein consists the magic beauty of this delightful art.

It has been, and still is, believed by many, that a good seat is in itself sufficient to make a good rider; but my gentle readers may rest assured, that, in either sex, good hands are the all-important means for effecting this much to be desired end. There is no denying that a good seat, and above all, a graceful one, is of vast importance to the fair equestrian; indeed, with me, it is so truly inestimable, that it forms one of the chief features of the present treatise. But as this excellence can be more easily attained, than what is proposed in this chapter, so soon as ladies find themselves at home in their saddles, their attention should be particularly

directed to those parts of the art, which require the longest practice, and study, viz., the use of the hands, and the management of the reins.

These points are as indispensable in the art of riding, as are those important auxiliaries "*avoir*" and "*être*" in the use of the French language; and it would be equally impossible for a lady to ride well, safely, or gracefully, without understanding the right use of the hands, and the right management of the reins, as it would be to speak, or write French, correctly, without a perfect knowledge of the proper occasions for using the above-named verbs respectively. A man can sit his horse by the strength of his limbs, and guide him by the force of his arm, but a woman's chief dependance, ever mainly rests, upon the delicacy, and address, of her "hands."

The exquisite sensibility, and power of immediate adaptation to the peculiarity of any horse's mouth, which is the essential of a perfect hand, are natural gifts, and can neither be communicated, nor self acquired. The means, however, for forming a good hand, can be imparted, and many high degrees of cultivation may be arrived at, by the aforesaid practice, and study. The advantage in this respect will, however, always preponderate in favour of those, whose good fortune enables them to commence this exercise in early youth, and carry it onwards

"By copse or dingle, heath or sheltering wood;"

for the truth must be confessed, that no art can implant such

confidence, or give such indescribable finish, as that which results from the experience gained in a country life. At the same time, let my fair readers distinctly understand, that the safety, grace, and excellence of ordinary riding, are, with few exceptions, within the reach of all.

Women, generally, have the reputation of possessing a finer hand upon a horse than men; and, where both sexes are equally gifted by nature, and have had the same opportunities of practice, I am inclined to think from the more delicate organization of a woman's hand, that such is, most probably, the case. But, without pretending to express any more decided opinion upon this point, I shall at once proceed to another particular, which more immediately affects my present purpose; and that is, to the fact, which must be patent to all, who are competent to form an opinion upon the subject, that of the many ladies who, at this gay season of the year, are daily seen in our public rides, by far the greater number, in riding "*parlance*," have no hands at all.

It is somewhat difficult to describe the principal and most apparent defect; the term "heavy" seems inappropriate as applied to a lady's hand, yet its effect upon the horse's mouth, is such, as a hand of that character can alone produce. The defect may perhaps be better, and more truly said to consist, in "unyielding rigidity." Who is there but must have noticed how few ladies'

horses go in good form, or appear at their ease? According to their spirit, or fineness of mouth, the horses are either fidgetty, or restless; or they go with their noses stretched out into the air, as if seeking to relieve themselves, but in vain, from the confining severity of the hand.

It is often said of our sex, that we delight in extremes, and justly as we may, in the main, plead to such a charge "not guilty," it certainly holds good, to a great extent, in the matter before us, for next in number, though in a far less degree, come the hands that appear to be divested of every particle of decision, and to possess scarcely energy enough for supporting the reins properly, or for turning the horse from one side to another.

When we reflect upon the facility, with which many of these same riders acquire various accomplishments, which call for almost fairy fingers in their execution, from the soft and beautiful delineations of the pencil, to the brilliant effects produced by their decision, and rapidity of touch upon the harp, or piano, it is obvious that we must look beyond the hand itself, for the origin of these defects.

To the use of the curb-bit in early practice, may be principally attributed the insensibility of hand; and, to the riding for a length of time some wretched drone, without spirit to work up to the bridle, or an animal with a mouth too fine to face the bit, and with

and from whose mouths, a novice can neither effect a correspondence, nor obtain an "*appui*," may in a great measure be ascribed the indecision of the hand.

Quiet, and well broken as a horse may be, he becomes more or less restless, when subjected to the action of the bit, by an unformed hand. His occasional efforts to relieve himself, from the undue pressure of the curb, frequently beget a feeling of nervousness in the novice. This feeling induces her to close her hand tightly on the reins, fear being sure to hold fast whatever it grasps, and thus not only to destroy the sensitiveness of the hand, and the elasticity of the wrist, by which the motions of the hand are ever to be guided and directed, but, as a consequence of so doing, materially, to interfere with, and impede, the natural movement of the horse's head.

The rigidity of the hand and arm which is caused by the fingers being thus tightly closed, and the consequently constrained position of the horse's head, effectually prevent the novice's ever requiring that easy "give and take" movement of the hand, which is indispensable to the horse's comfort, and freedom of action.

In the first instance, if the novice is placed upon a horse that works well up to the bridle in a plain snaffle, these evils can scarcely arise. The simplicity of the snaffle prevents all annoyance to the

horse's mouth; and, as it enables him to resist the hand, when unduly retained, his moving forward is effected with his wonted ease, and freedom.

The hand, in this case, being obliged to accompany the movements of the horse's head, as it advances, and recedes, in his action, becomes accustomed to the motion, and, relaxing his own tenseness, readily accommodates itself to all that is required. Thus the novice gradually learns, by practice, under competent advice, to establish that correspondence, or fine response of feeling, which should ever exist between the rider's hand and the horse's mouth, by the establishing of which alone, can the horse ever be brought to submit with pleasure, to the constraint of the bit.

In the early lessons, the reins are to be separated, in the manner already described, for holding the snaffle. Hence, two advantages are gained, the one positive, the other negative. First, the right hand learns its duties as well as the bridle hand, and is afterwards prepared to act with effect, whenever its use is required; and next, the tendency to throwing the right shoulder back, which results from first taking the reins in the left hand only, is finally put an end to.

To preserve a light easy feeling upon the horse's mouth, the hands should only be sufficiently closed, to prevent the reins being

withdrawn, by any sudden movement of the horse's head. The reins, being drawn to a determinate length, owe their bearing on the horse's mouth, principally to the contraction, or relaxation, of the hand. To demonstrate this, let the fair reader take a piece of tape, and pass it through the bridle hand under the little finger, in the manner of a left rein, holding it down between the fore-finger and thumb; then let her, in an easy and unconstrained manner, place the hand in the first position, with the lower part nearly open, while with the other hand she holds out the tape at arm's length between the fore-finger and thumb. By then closing the left hand firmly, she will find that a powerful strain is made upon the fore-finger and thumb of the right hand. By relaxing the hand again, that strain is entirely removed. By alternately relaxing and contracting the hand, she perceives to what a great extent these simple means are capable of giving liberty, and restriction, to the horse. She will further learn how severe must be the effect, upon the horse's mouth, of the hand's being retained in one unvarying state of rigidity. This fact becomes still more obvious when the nature of the bit and curb are taken into account. The tape reins and elastic band before alluded to, afford excellent practice for the hands in this respect.

But to convey a more practical notion of the manner in which the hand operates, or corresponds to the effect produced upon the horse's mouth, let the lady be mounted on a horse, whose mouth is

perfectly obedient, but not too delicate, with her hand properly placed in the first position, and the reins collected till there is a steady feeling on the horse's mouth. The hand being connected with the reins, the reins with the bit, and the bit operating upon the horse's mouth, she will perceive that she cannot move the hand, nor even a finger, without having the horse's mouth more or less affected by the motion—however slight it be. This is called the "correspondence."

On urging the horse to action, if the hand is held perfectly steady, the fingers feel, by the contraction, and dilatation, of the reins, a slight sensation or tug, occasioned by the cadence of every step. This sensation, which is reciprocally felt both by the hand, and in the horse's mouth, by means of the above described correspondence, is called the "*appui*;" and so long as this *appui* is preserved between the hand and mouth, the horse is in perfect obedience to the rider, his pace and movements being apparently directed rather by the mind of the rider, than by the compulsion of the hand.

If this *appui*, however, is always maintained in precisely the same degree, the horse's mouth becomes heated, and pained; the hands, therefore, must ever be, though to the observer all but imperceptibly so, one continual spring, impulsive to the movements of the horse's head. In short, the horse must never feel a continued pull, or

restraint, upon the bridle, unless it be to convey to him some distinct purpose, or command from his rider.

If the hands hang upon the bridle, or remain fixed and without variation, they produce what is termed a "dead pull" upon the horse's mouth ; that is, there is no motion of the rider's hands in response to the movement of the horse's head. If this state of things does not make him restless, or unruly, at the moment, as may fairly be anticipated, it will completely mar the beauty, and freedom, of his action, and will assuredly spoil his mouth, by causing that part of it, upon which the bit acts, to become in time hardened and feelingless.

As the uninitiated reader can scarcely be supposed to understand this, let me explain that, when the reins are drawn and held tightly, the "port," or arched part of the bit, presses violently against the "bars," or roof of the horse's mouth, whilst the curb-chain, which is fastened at each side of the bit, is drawn by the same action, with great force, round the lower jaw. Hence, considerable pain infallibly ensues, especially, if by whip or otherwise, he is urged on, regardless of his sufferings, which are necessarily augmented by action.

No wonder then that many horses, from this cause, acquire the disagreeable habit of endeavouring to "force the hand," that is,

suddenly throwing their heads forward, with the view of releasing themselves from the restraint of the bridle. In so doing, they frequently pull an inexperienced rider forward on the head of the saddle, which may not only alarm her, but sometimes results in a no slight injury.

But if, on the contrary, there is an easy responsive movement of the hands, with a firmness proportioned to the peculiar sensibility of the horse's mouth, so far from the light feeling then experienced from them becoming unpleasant to him, a considerable amount of support is derived from it by him, and it is in the nicety with which this movement is regulated, and the judgment with which the support resulting from it is afforded, that consists that true charm in riding, "a light hand."

There is scarcely any horse, but has his peculiar sensibility of mouth, and degree of bearing, both which it is necessary that his rider should discover, and make herself familiar with. She must also learn to regulate the support that should be given to him at all times, by firm, yet delicate hands, which never surprise his mouth by sudden transitions, but effect everything gradually, and at the same time, with spirit and resolution.

Heavy, inactive, hands soon spoil, if not absolutely *destroy* the finest mouth. Delicate and good hands, on the contrary, do not

only preserve, in its sensibility, a light bearing, but very much improve a heavy one. They, moreover, at once feel, and know, whether a horse has his proper bearing in the mouth, by his playing pleasantly, and steadily with his bit, and by the easy, unhampered, freedom of his movements.

It is ever to be remembered that the lighter the bearing of a horse can be made, the better, provided there is a corresponding lightness in the rider's hands; and, also, that the hands which gain their point with the least force are always the best hands.

If a horse carry his head low, and hang upon the bit, so destroying the delicacy of the correspondence between hand and mouth, let the rider raise her hand, and with a quickening sensation of the fingers upon the reins, rather *invite*, than compel, the head to rise; the left leg on one side, and the whip on the other, being at the same time gently applied to press his haunches under him. It is thus that the rider "unites," or "collects," her horse.

When a horse is properly united, he is under complete control, is light in hand, and works correctly upon his haunches, with a safe, and stylish, action. When disunited, he goes principally upon his shoulders, and his action is alike inelegant, and insecure.

A heavy insensible hand cannot unite a horse, the attempt to

do so is attended with a severity, which is sure of calling forth the resistance of the horse. Thus, if a ribbon be placed across the reader's forehead, and the two ends be held in a horizontal direction by a person behind her, should the reader stand quite upright, she can neither pull at the person, nor endure the hand to pull at her, without falling, or running backward. Such then is the situation of the horse when united. Accordingly, when the reader feels the hand severe, or expects it to pull, she guards against it by bending the body, projecting the head, and planting one foot behind. This is the situation of the horse when disunited, and defending himself against the severity of the hand. To obtain relief from a heavy inactive hand, a horse, will, according to his temper, either hang upon the bit, or pull with such force, as frequently to render it very difficult for a lady to ride him. Hence, heavy hands make hard-mouthed horses.

With the requisite firmness, the operations of the hands are always to be gentle, and *gradual*. If the rider go, at once, from a firm hand to a slack one, she entirely abandons her horse, and deprives him of the support he trusts to. On the contrary, if she pass from the slack to the tight rein on a sudden, she necessarily jerks her hand, and gives a violent shock to the horse's mouth.

A sudden jerk of the reins inflicts a sharp twinge upon the horse's mouth, by the pressure of the bit; it invariably makes him

start, and is apt to prove dangerous to the rider, if the horse have a spirit difficult to soothe ; whilst a frequent repetition of this unlooked-for motion is sure to spoil his temper. A horse is sometimes so exceedingly tender in the mouth, that, without being in the slightest degree vicious, a sudden jerk of the bridle causes him instantly to rear ; and unless the rider as quickly yields, or drops her hands, he is liable to fall backwards, and a serious accident is the consequence. The reins are never to be suddenly, or sharply jerked, except for the purpose of correction, or to accomplish some end for which other means have failed, and then, only, in the exercise of great judgment and discretion.

Again, suddenly yielding the hand is most objectionable, and perhaps still more likely to entail disagreeable consequences ; for, as has been before observed, the horse always receives, or always should receive, a certain amount of support from the rider's hand, suddenly yielding it necessarily deprives him of so much support, and at once throws him on his shoulders. In this unexpected change of position, it is far from unlikely that he may go carelessly, and make a false step, when, from relaxation of the reins, the rider may not be able to assist him, or recover him, in time to prevent a fall.

The general position of the hand has already been fully described ; it is one, however, which varies with circumstances. The effect of

the rider's hand upon the horse, at any particular moment, depends principally upon the situation of the hand, and position of the horse, in relation to the point in view. Thus, if a horse attempt to break away with his rider, or, if the rider is compelled to enter into any violent contest with him, *except* in cases of *rearing*, it is necessary to raise the hands, in order to obtain a greater command over the horse—the raising of the rider's hands increasing her power, and the raising the horse's head diminishing his power. Again, if the rider is desirous of improving her horse's carriage, and of drawing from him a lofty and stylish action, the hands must be elevated, with an alternate feeling, and easing, of the reins, proportioned to the effect it is intended to produce. On the other hand, if a horse rear, it is of vital importance that the hand be instantly dropped, so that all bearing on the reins may immediately cease. If, at any moment, from the hand's being too high and confining, the horse toss his head, or stretch his nose straight out before him, or go with his lower jaw twisted on one side, let the rider drop her hand gradually, and ease the reins, gently feeling them again at each point in the descent, till the horse's head falls into its proper position, or in more technical language, until the rider “finds his mouth.”

The hand may also be held at a greater or lesser distance from the body, as occasion requires. A horse may want the momentary liberty of his head to cough, to dislodge a fly, or the like ; in such

a case, the hand, but not the shoulder, must be advanced and dropped to grant him the freedom required, *without altering the length of the reins*, the hand regaining its ordinary position, as the horse's head returns to its proper place. Or, the horse's head may become cramped by too long confinement in one position; and it may be necessary, for his relief, to let him walk for a short time with his head at liberty. Here, again, the hand is to be advanced in like manner for the purpose; but, it must be yielded gradually, and still retain the same length of rein, that it may ever preserve a light feeling upon the horse's mouth, and so be prepared, on the instant, if necessary, to bring the bit into play.

If, instead of the hand's being advanced upon these occasions, the rider were to lengthen the reins, the *appui* would be lost, and the horse would be under no immediate control. At such a moment, should the horse, from any sudden cause or alarm, either start aside, or run away, the rider has no power to prevent him; moreover, were he to stumble, she would either be unable to recover him, and avoid falling over his head, or, from the length of the reins, she would, in throwing her body backward to assist the horse, be liable to a fall in that direction, as he is suddenly regaining his legs.

By advancing the hand, and still retaining the usual length of rein, the horse is always "in hand;" and, although the hand may

scarcely bear a feather's weight upon his mouth, the correspondence between them is nevertheless effectually preserved. The hand, thus ever on the alert, becomes, by practice, discriminating, and sensible of the object of every movement of the horse; so that upon the slightest intimation of a start, bolt, or stumble, the horse is immediately on the bit, and more or less upon his haunches, by an almost imperceptible turn of the hand. Thus, the rider may always allow her horse any indulgence that is necessary for his ease and comfort, at the same time that she effectually ensures her own safety.

It is frequently matter of astonishment with bad riders, how gentle and tractable horses become the moment they are mounted by skilful ones, though there is little evidence of any skill employed. The reason is obvious: the horses go at their ease, yet have instinct and sagacity enough to discover, that all their motions are watched.

The hands must be considered in connection also with the other important aids of the body, left leg, and whip, with which they are at all times to act in concert.

It must be observed that a lady can only aid with one leg—the left leg on the left side. The whip, gently pressed against the horse, must give the corresponding aid on the right side, and for this purpose it must be carried with the lash downward. At other times, the whip may be differently carried, but never in

such a manner that its point touches, or tickles, the horse's hind quarters, or flanks.

Not only is a horse incited to more prompt obedience to the indications of the hand, by the aids of the leg, and whip, but there is scarcely an operation of the hand, that cannot be most materially assisted by them, when they are properly applied. For instance: if a horse, at any time, flag in his movements, or go heavily in hand, while the hand is raising his fore-hand, and freshening his mouth, the pressure of the leg, and whip, to his sides, forces him up to the bridle, and corrects the action. The hand, of itself alone, cannot easily accomplish the purpose, and the moment its effect ceases, the horse droops his head, and goes upon his shoulders; but the pressure of the heel, and whip, forcing him up to the bridle, as the hand is raised, of necessity throws him upon his haunches, and lightens the action of the forehand.

The aids of the leg, or heel, and whip, have their progressive strength and effect, according to the disposition and character of the animal, and the effect intended to be produced. As a general rule, however, the more lightly they are applied, the more effective they become. A horse generally goes better with gentle, than with strong aids, as the latter are apt to confound and surprise a weak horse, and too highly to excite one that is full of spirit and fire.

The aids of the body are no less numerous, and important ; for, however dexterous and ready a rider may be, it is, nevertheless, impossible for her to time the aids of the hand, leg, and whip, with the same exactness, or to use them with the same certainty and effect, as when their action proceeds from the requisite motion of the body, and is governed by this motion. Thus, if a rider wishes her horse to advance, she must momentarily incline the body slightly forward, the hand, as an appurtenance of the body, without any action of its own, naturally accompanying it in the same direction, relaxes the reins to give the horse liberty, and the left leg being brought closer to him on one side, and the whip pressed against him on the other, simultaneously urge him to action.

For effecting the “stop,” if the body is allowed to recede, the hand recedes likewise, and the bearing on the reins being consequently increased, a slight turn of the wrist, as already described in the fifth position of the hand, arrests the action of the horse’s fore-hand, whilst the left leg, and whip, being at the same moment closed against his sides, collect his haunches under him, and complete the stop in the most desirable manner.

In turning to the right, or left, the operations of the hands are greatly assisted by the inclination of the rider’s body in the direction which she intends the horse to take ; whilst by closing at the same moment the leg, or whip, against the horse, on the side to

which the turn is being made, his hind quarters are thrown in some degree outward, and placed in a more proper position to follow the shoulders.

The omission of the aid of the body is frequently fatal to the successful operation of the other aids. For instance, if a horse rear, the mere advancing or dropping the hand to slacken the reins is not of itself a sufficient control; for, if the horse rise very high, the rider retaining her original position, must, to preserve her balance, support herself by the bridle, and, in so doing, runs the risk of pulling the horse backward, and of being herself killed, perhaps, in the fall. But if, as the horse rises, the rider instantly incline her body forward, not only is the hand advanced likewise, but by the same movement, the weight of the body is thrown upon the horse's shoulders, in such a manner, as materially to assist in bringing his fore-feet to the ground again.

On the other hand, if a horse stumble, and be in danger of falling, the aid of the hand alone is not sufficient to recover him; but, if the body is immediately thrown back, the hand goes back with it, and the weight of the body, then, enables the hand to throw in a powerful check, to the downward tendency of the horse. By the same movement, the weight of the body is entirely removed from the horse's shoulders, so that it cannot impede his efforts for regaining his legs.

Again, if a horse attempt to run away, the inclination of the body backward at once brings the hands into the same direction, and thus the latter can most easily, and effectually, control him. How frequently do we see, in our public rides, the evil effects of a non-attention to this golden rule. A lady may be quietly walking her horse, probably, with that great and common fault of not having him properly "in hand," when an indiscreet rider gallops by at full speed, and causes her horse to start off at the same pace. In this unexpected extremity, she *snatches* the reins towards her; but, both from their relaxed state, and from the position of her own body, she is unable to obtain a proper bearing on the horse's mouth. In despair, she draws her hands back on one side, but this action inclines her body forward, and destroys their power. At the same time, also, the left leg is naturally carried back against the horse's side, and thus increases his speed, and impetuosity.

A simple inclination of the body, backward, in the first instance, would have placed the hands, and leg, in their proper positions; one moment would then have sufficed for adjusting the reins, when the collective power of all the aids might have been brought to bear for bringing him to the stop.

An accident may very readily occur, to an inexperienced rider, upon such occasions; for the horse, without being naturally vicious, may commence kicking, from the same causes that so generally

induce the most quiet animals to kick and plunge, when first turned loose into a pasture with other horses, viz:—excitement, and the absence of control. The dangerous inclination of the rider's body forward, in this case, subjects her to being thrown at any moment.

Since the operations of the hands, then, can be so greatly assisted by a well regulated movement of the body, it is obvious that, any fickleness of motion must have the opposite tendency of rendering them unsteady. Against this error, the fair novice cannot be too scrupulously on her guard. Not only will this uncertainty prevent her ever becoming a good, and a graceful, horse-woman, but it will constantly lead her into danger; for nothing is more likely to make a high-spirited horse unruly, and oftentimes unmanageable, than unsteady hands.

Inexperienced riders frequently run the risk of an accident, by diverting their eyes from the horse, to the object at which he is taking fright. The first notes of a band of music, or any unaccustomed sight, or sound, that causes him alarm, attracts their attention; and, before they are prepared for the emergency, the horse has started off, or shied on one side. Even if the good temper, and natural docility, of the animal, in the first instance, prevent his doing so, the inclination of the rider's body in the direction of the object, may bring her into danger, by carrying the

hands along with the body; and by, perhaps, turning the horse's head suddenly towards the cause of his alarm. At any rate, before she is aware of it, the horse may come in contact with some other object, or be placed himself, and the rider also, in some difficult or dangerous position.

Examples of the foregoing evil are not infrequent in parts of the country where streams abound. In crossing a ford, where the current may happen to be rapid, the eyes of a novice, instead of being directed straight over the horse's head to the opposite point, are attracted by the running water, till the body, turning in the same direction, and carrying the hands along with it, dangerously diverts the horse from the proper course. A rider often discovers her error by finding her feet, and ankles immersed in water, and, perhaps, if the brook be swollen at the time, by herself and horse being borne down the stream. Even if these two evils are avoided, there is still peril of a third; for should the horse start suddenly, whilst the body and hands are in such a position, a fall, under any but agreeable circumstances, can hardly fail of ensuing, from the balance being thus disturbed, and the control lost.

It is a general rule, especially upon the slightest symptom of restiveness, or in any critical situation, that the eyes should be steadily directed to the horse's head. The body will then be square to the front, and the hands, consequently, in their proper position

for acting with the greatest effect, either, to prevent the horse from suddenly starting off, or from swerving, to the right or left, of the course desired by the rider.

When a rider has occasion to turn her body, to look back at any object, or to adjust her habit, or converse with a friend, the hand must retain its central position, and sensitiveness. Thus, an equal feeling upon both reins is preserved, and the horse's course is not in the least disturbed.

The body, in any of its movements, must carefully guard against being thrown out of the balance, or having its flexibility destroyed, and be so ordered, that it can recover its proper position in a moment, without rendering the hands unsteady.

Until the principles of good riding have been thoroughly acquired by sufficient practice, and study, the rider should never depart from the strict rules of the science ; otherwise, bad, and inelegant, habits will speedily be formed, and mar her future progress. When she is well confirmed in these principles, a more easy and "*négligée*" style may be adopted at will, because that ease will then be based upon system ; while judgment and experience will, moreover, dictate the moments, at which it may be assumed with safety. In any deviation from the ordinary position, she will not sit on one side, allow the shoulders to become round, the motions of the figure

to be uncertain and irregular, or the elbows to shake about, to the ruin of the hands, and discomfort of the horse. An easy and graceful flexibility, alike pleasant to both horse, and rider, will regulate all her movements, which will ever be governed by propriety, and a becoming sense of security. The hand will, upon all occasions, retain its properties, and never neglect the horse. A judicious, but almost unseen, application of the various aids, will guide, and assist him in the performance of his duties, and will combine with the most pleasing effects, that exquisite ease, which marks the accomplished horsewoman, and stamps at once her perfection in the art. Science, in riding, distinguishes itself from mere superficial acquirement, by the rider's graceful quietude of movement, elegant demeanour, and masterly control over her horse—attainments, which not only are full of delight to the lady herself, but speak, with a thrilling eloquence, to the eye of every intelligent beholder.





J. Burkill, del. - E. Menn, lith.

Day & Son, Lith. to the Queen.

THE WALK

THE WALK.

"My horse is weary of his stall."

A vast amount of valuable instruction is gained from the cultivation of that apparently simple pace, the "walk;" which, of course, is the first ventured upon by the fair novice, and ought to be continued for some time, before any of the other paces are attempted.

It is in the walk that, she makes herself thoroughly acquainted with the rules laid down in the lessons on the seat, reins, and hands; and that she devotes her attention to the systematic study of all the various small links connecting the great chain, especially, turning, stopping, and reining back. An accident may easily occur through want of skill, and readiness, in performing these movements, which should be so carefully practised in the commencement, that the lady may not be confused, if suddenly called upon to stop her horse, turn him to the right or left, or back him out of any difficult or dangerous position. But from early and constant practice, she must be enabled to do so with such perfect ease, as not only renders the movement graceful, but ensures

obedience in the animal, from the feeling of confidence her quiet, and steady, promptitude imparts to him.

To commence the walk, the rider must collect her reins carefully till there is a light and even feeling on the horse's mouth, and then press the left leg and whip lightly against his sides to urge him to move forward, without which the horse is not permitted to advance. Walking commenced, the leg and whip resume their former position, the hands remain steady and pliant, and the body yields to the movements of the horse.

If the horse carries his head well, he should be ridden with an easy rein, that he may walk away with a firm and regular step. If the bearing on his mouth is too great, he is unable to move freely, and his step will be short, and irregular. Yet, if not kept sufficiently in hand, he may carry his head low, walk in a loose, and careless, manner, and not raise and bend his knee, so as to put the foot out flat and even, in which case he is liable from any slight cause to stumble.

By the operation of the horse's mouth on the reins, the hands should delicately, but distinctly, feel every beat of his action. If he do not work well up to the bridle, he must be animated by pressure of the heel and whip. Should he break into a trot, he must be gradually reined in, till he resumes the walk. If he require

animating again, the movement for that purpose must be more gentle than before, lest he once more break into a trot.

The perfection of the walk consists in an animated quick step, measuring exact distances, and marking a regular time, with the knee moderately bent, the leg appearing suspended in the air for an instant, and the foot coming perfectly flat to the ground.

Many horses acquire a habit of "ambling," which is a peculiar description of gait between trotting, and walking; in some cases not disagreeable, but invariably spoiling the walk, and tending to mar the other paces. It should, therefore, never be encouraged. It is usually caused by bad riding, either with loose reins, a dull inactive hand, or an unsteady seat. On ambling, the horse should be immediately pulled up to the stop, and made to go off again in the walk; if he relapses, the same means must be tried again, the rider chiding him at the same time with the voice, till he yields obedience.

THE TURN IN THE WALK.

In considering the "turn," the fair reader must bear in mind all that has been previously remarked, about the support a horse receives from the rider's hand. This support is more generally needed in making the turn, than in going straight forward; in

the former case, the horse being obliged to cross his legs, and not being properly supported, is very likely either to fall, or make the turn in an awkward, and imperfect, manner.

All turns are at first to be made very slowly.

In turning to the right, the right hand must be a little below the left, and the bearing on the right rein be increased by the little finger's pulling gently upwards towards the body—never downwards to the knee:—the left hand retains at the same time a steady feeling on the left rein.

In turning to the left, the left hand is to be a little below the right, and the bearing on the left rein to be increased by the little finger's pulling gently upwards towards the body, the right hand retaining at the same time a steady feeling on the right rein.

In turning right round, the extra bearing on the inward or leading rein must be continued till the turn is complete, a steady feeling on the outward rein being at the same time retained.

In making the turn either to the right, or left, or right round, the horse is to be supported, and kept up to the bridle, by an occasional slight pressure of the leg and whip. Thus he is made to obey the leading rein, and to bring his haunches under him.

The pressure of the inward aid alone, the leg or whip separately, occasions the horse to throw his haunches too much outwards, the outward aid must, therefore, never be omitted. It is also ever to be remembered, that the extra bearing on the inward rein does not exempt from a steady feeling on the other; otherwise, the bridle will have an imperfect bearing on the horse's mouth, and, from the relaxation of the outward rein, the rider becomes unable to steady and support the horse in making the turn.

Short and abrupt turns are to be carefully avoided, or the horse will be apt to cross his legs incorrectly, especially, if allowed to turn lazily, which ought never to be permitted. If possible, sufficient room should always be taken to make the turn freely, but deliberately; and, if the horse be dull, the animation of the heel and whip must be increased to enliven him.

I cannot too strenuously caution my fair readers against the pernicious and dangerous custom of effecting the turn, by pressing the outward rein against the horse's neck; for, in so doing, the inward rein is completely relaxed, and the horse is abandoned, and deprived of all support, at the very moment he most urgently requires it. Should he, under such circumstances, make a false step, or slip upon any rough or uneven ground, a fall is inevitable.

The too frequent habit of crossing the right hand to the near

rein, in turning to the left, must be also carefully avoided. The act is very unbecoming of a horsewoman; and, besides, deprives the hand of the power to use the whip at the time, if the horse does not at once obey the leading rein.

When the reins are held in the left hand only, the same steady feeling must be retained on the outward rein, while the turn is being made. Here the beauty and correctness of the bridle hand are admirably displayed; for, while the inward rein leads, the hand, if working true, by a steady feeling of the outward rein, also affords a support.

THE STOP IN THE WALK.

A lady cannot be considered a good horsewoman until she is "*au fait*" in the stop. This is of far greater consequence than is usually imagined; for the power to stop properly, and within a very short space, not only shews the great superiority of the rider's hand over the horse, but is frequently the means of escaping very serious accidents.

The stop is performed by the rider's throwing back her shoulders, and feeling both reins equally and firmly, by turning the little fingers upwards towards the body, and by closing the left leg and whip for an instant to the horse's sides. These motions, which

must be simultaneous, will almost invariably lead to effecting the stop properly. The pressure of the left leg and whip must on no account be omitted, or the horse will not bring his haunches well up, but will make the stop on his shoulders, a process which must never be permitted.

The stop ought to be, not slow, but gradual; and all sudden jerks are to be avoided, so that the horse may have time to collect himself, and thus stop evenly, and firmly. The moment he has so stopped, the reins are to be eased, to let him know that the rider does not wish him to proceed; while sufficient command must still be retained for immediately stopping him again, should he start, or move forward unbidden.

The bearing on the reins, and the animation of the leg and whip, necessary to stop a horse properly, always depend upon the peculiar state of his mouth, and on his general character, which the rider's observation will soon enable her to discover.

Care must at all times be taken to make the stop steadily, and not by a sudden or violent pull upon the reins, which causes the horse, if tender mouthed, to rear, and, if he have weak loins, to be severely injured by being thus powerfully acted on.

A horse ought never to be stopped in turning, or he may possibly strike his legs together, and throw himself down.

REINING BACK IN THE WALK.

Much care and practice are required for reining back properly. In the whole science of equitation there is no single point, that so well repays the attentive study and perfect acquirement of itself; for it not only greatly improves the hands, but enables a lady skilfully to extricate herself from positions of danger, to which those who ride much are not unfrequently exposed. For instance, if a horse get between two carriages, and be unable either to turn around or advance, there is no alternative but backing out; and, unless this is done cleverly, he may, perchance, strike his leg against one of the wheels, and become so affrighted, as to escape from an accident with much difficulty.

To rein back, the rider must first bring her horse to a stand-still, and then, by an equal and steady feeling of both reins, cause him to step backward. For doing this the more readily, the hands ought to be kept from rising, with the knuckles a little down. The horse must, at the same time, be gently pressed with both the left leg and whip, in order to keep him up to the bridle, and prevent his swerving from the required line.

The body must not be thrown back as in the stop, but rather incline forward, to give the hand greater effect, without provoking the horse to rear: an occurrence not unusual with horses which do not readily obey the hand. If the rider attempt to compel the horse backward by the weight of her body, and he rear, her body cannot be brought forward; and, if happening to have the preponderance, she inevitably pulls the horse backwards on herself.

If the hand be not immediately obeyed, the rider must play with the horse's mouth, through a quickening sensation of the fingers on the reins, which will induce him to raise his head, and on this, a slight extra feeling on the reins generally causes him to step back. The moment he is constrained to back, the body, if in a proper position, will incline forward, and the reins must be eased. A well trained lady's horse obeys the slightest feeling on his mouth, and at once backs evenly, and without losing his balance; but a young, or awkward, animal is necessarily overbalanced, and by further constraint, would back till he fell. In such a case, the rider, after every step, must yield the hands and body, so as to allow the horse to recover his balance thoroughly, ere again subjected to the bearing of the bridle.

Reining back, with an inclination to the right, requires a slight extra bearing on the left rein, with a steady feeling on the right,

and a pressure of the whip on the same side, to prevent the horse's hind quarters traversing too much in that direction.

For reining back, with an inclination to the left, there must be a slight extra bearing on the right rein, with a steady feeling on the left, and a pressure of the left leg, to prevent the horse's hind quarters traversing too much to the left.

The hand, and heel, or whip, are always to support and assist each other. Thus, in reining straight back, if the horse's hind quarters traverse to the right, the pressure of the whip must be increased, at the same time that the hand must have an extra feeling of the right rein; this must, however, be effected with the greatest delicacy, lest the hind quarters in turn be directed too much to the left.

The horse, having backed to the required point, must not be permitted to stop in a loose and straggling position, but be pressed up to the bridle by the leg and whip, so as to be properly united before moving forward again.

Reining back occasionally greatly improves the carriage of a lady's horse, and teaches him to work correctly upon his haunches, but the exercise being a painful and severe one, especially to a young, or weakly framed, animal, ought never to be unduly prolonged.

THE TROT.

“The steed obeyed,
With arching neck, and bended head,
And glancing eye, and quivering ear,
As if he loved *her* voice to hear.”

SCOTT.

It is indispensable that ladies learn to trot, though not making it afterwards a general practice. When properly taught, trotting greatly assists in forming a firm seat; and many are the occasions on which a knowledge of it is absolutely necessary. For example, in reining in from the canter, a horse generally trots a few lengths before coming to the walk, and in the sudden change of a pace, will give to the rider considerable “*embarras*,” unless she knows how to trot. In a long ride, the relief to both horse and rider, from alternate trot and canter, can hardly be too much appreciated. Again, a lady, particularly if living in the country, may have the offer of riding a gentleman’s horse, recommended perhaps for his extreme docility. From his having been previously ridden exclusively by a gentleman, he frequently knows little of the lady’s chief pace—the canter—and, when his fair rider endeavours to set him off into one, she finds his attempts at obedience such a dis-

agreeable "cross-jolting" as, spite of herself, to be reduced to pulling him up into a walk. Here, then, among other reasons is one highly commending a knowledge of trotting; for, though the horse may know nothing of the canter, it is very probable that his trot, from being so customary among gentlemen, especially in road riding, will be perfect; and accordingly, this pace, to a lady who knows how to trot, not only fails of being irksome to her, but becomes extremely easy, and pleasant.

Many gentlemen object to their horses being ridden by ladies, considering as they do, and not without reason, that the constant use of the canter destroys the freedom of their other paces; a knowledge of trotting, then, might often ensure a favorite horse for the fair rider's use.

Unless the trot be acquired in early youth, it will require, above any other pace, much study and practice, in order to guarding against awkwardness and fatigue, which are two certain results of its not being properly understood. Great judgment is necessary on the part of the teacher in directing its early practice, so that the novice may escape from inconvenience and pain, which may give her distaste for the pace, and induce her to abandon its study altogether.

Simple and agreeable as the practice of trotting may at once appear to a gentleman, it is far otherwise with a lady, until she

has overcome the novelty of the motion, and learned to rise and fall with the action of the horse. A moment's reflection shews that this cannot be the same easy task in her case; for what can be greater than the difference in the positions of the gentleman and lady on horseback? The former sits in a natural position, perfectly straight to his horse, with equal power on both sides. The latter, on the contrary, sits in an acquired position; the upper part of the body being directed straight forward, whilst the lower inclines to one side, whence all her power is derived. How, then, can the same results be immediately expected; and that what may be simple and agreeable to the one, can, at first, be otherwise than difficult and disagreeable to the other?

The figures best adapted to this pace, not as regards its actual acquirement, for this is within the compass of all, but for the appearance of ease and elegance in trotting, are those that nature has fashioned rather short from the hip to the knee. The reason will be understood on my explaining that, in the ordinary trot, the lady should rise from her saddle in harmony with the movements of the horse, and to effect this, the body must incline slightly forward; greater length, therefore, naturally throws the body additionally forward as she rises; and, in the endeavour to prevent the appearance of stooping, it is difficult to rise freely from the saddle, without experiencing considerable fatigue, and perhaps pain. Hence, tall women do not always look well trotting,

though they have the especial advantage of cantering with exquisite ease, and grace.

In the early lessons, the trot must only be continued for a short distance at a time. The moment a lady feels the slightest fatigue, or embarrassment, she should pull up into the walk, resuming the trot after a short interval ; and, as she becomes more accustomed to the peculiarity of the pace, the distance may be gradually increased till proficiency is attained.

For commencing the trot, the rider must apply the leg and whip for an instant to the horse's sides, and, at the same time, raise his forehand by a gentle feeling of both reins, the little finger of each hand drawn rather upwards, and towards the body.

As the horse moves on in the trot, his action gives an impetus to the motion of the fair rider's body, and, the moment this is experienced, she must rise from the saddle in even time with the horse's step. To do this, she assists herself by leaning the left foot lightly in the stirrup—the knee and instep being perfectly flexible—and by steadily holding the reins, so that the movement of the horse's head upon her hands may afford an additional impulse, and accurately enable her to time the rise. By this instruction, it is distinctly to be understood, that she is not to raise herself up by the bridle, or bear heavily on the horse's mouth. On the contrary, her hands

must be as light and pliant as possible, while preserving a due correspondence, and a just *appui*.

The rise from the saddle is to be made as perpendicularly, as is consistent with ease and grace, and only just so high as to avoid the jar that ensues from the movements of the rider and the horse not being simultaneous. The return of the body to the saddle is rendered as light, and even, as possible, by the support of the right knee on the pommel, and by the pressure of the foot in the stirrup.

The great aim is perfect uniformity with the movements of the horse, which, once attained, exacts very little effort on the rider's part, as she will find herself mainly assisted by the even action of the horse. Nothing can appear more ridiculous, or grotesque, than a rider rising and falling in the saddle, at a greater or lesser speed than that of the horse ; nor, from the irregularity of the movement, can anything be more fatiguing, and disagreeable.

Great care must be taken in rising, to avoid the unsightly, and too frequent, habit of twisting the body to the left. Many ladies do so from the idea that it facilitates the rise, but in reality it impedes it, by rendering the position, and hands, unsteady, and by destroying the purchase of the foot and knee. The rise should be made as squarely as possible, the shoulders being maintained on a parallel line with the horse's ears. From the peculiarity of the

lady's seat on horseback, it is not generally so easy to preserve that perfect evenness of the shoulders in the trot, which is most essential to the fair rider's elegant appearance ; but, in this desirable object, she will find herself greatly aided, by separating the reins, and occupying the right hand with one of them.

In addition to its unsightly appearance, this habit of twisting the body not only renders the attainment of a good seat impossible ; but, from the uneven manner in which the rise and fall of the body is thus effected, in a long ride, it brings on great discomfort, and fatigue.

This pernicious habit frequently arises from the rider's pointing her left foot outward, which, as I have already observed in its proper place, is at all times an error, and especially so in the trot ; since, in rising, it directs the leg and body to one side. Let the foot be kept, as nearly as possible, on a level with the horse's side, and the leg and body will naturally incline straight forward, in the same direction as the movements of the horse.

As soon as a lady can trot without fatigue, or uneasiness, she should learn to regulate the horse's pace, and to maintain a true, and united action.

The action of the horse in trotting is alternate—he has always two feet on, and two off the ground. When the near fore foot and

off hind foot are on, the off fore foot and near hind foot are off; thus making two steps, which steps, when the action is true, measure exact distances, in regular time of one, two, the two feet being brought to the ground at the same moment.

In trot, as in canter, the horse leads with a foot, either right or left, and the leading side is accordingly a little more advanced than the other. This nice discrimination is rarely marked save by those who have had much experience in riding. A horse that has been properly broken, and, as it is technically termed, suppld to both hands, trots with equal ease to either hand; but with animals that have not been so suppld, if chance or fatigue makes them change the leading leg for that which they are not accustomed to, their action becomes confined, irregular, and unpleasant.

As the trot is the foundation of excellence in the other paces, it should always be correctly performed. Unsteady hands are sure to render it irregular; so also are reins either too loose, or too tight, and sudden transitions from one to the other. Whenever the trot appears incorrect, the reins should be immediately examined; if too loose, and the horse is disunited, and going upon his shoulders, they should be shortened, gently drawn upwards towards the body, and the heel and whip applied to collect the horse, and force him up to the bridle. If too tight, they should be gradually yielded, to enable him to step out with greater ease, and freedom.

With well trained horses, irregularity is generally the fault of the rider. With young or ill-broken animals, it may proceed from their natural awkwardness, and greater skill is then required to render the pace perfect. When tired, almost all horses, if left to themselves, trot carelessly; a tendency to be guarded against as much as possible, since, under such circumstances, they are very apt to stumble and fall.

Frequently varying the speed of the horse in the trot will be found excellent practice for the hands; reining him in gently that he may not be jarred, and rendered unsteady by a jerk of the bridle, or sudden change of his position; and gradually yielding the hands, that when he steps out again, he may not lose the required support. These are points most worthy of attention.

The horse should always be kept "well within himself;" that is, properly collected, and not be allowed, or urged, to trot at a greater speed than he can perform with a true, and equal action. Even with the opposite sex, pressing a horse, in the trot, to his utmost speed, calls forth anything but admiration in a public ride; and with a lady, it tells still more to her disadvantage. A horse, that is forced to trot to the extreme of, or beyond, his natural pace, is sure at some moment of breaking into a rough, unconnected gallop, alike detrimental to the comfort and appearance of the rider.

When a horse breaks from the trot into the canter or gallop, unbidden by his rider, he must be reined in firmly, but gradually, and at the same time be chidden with her voice, to teach him that he is doing wrong. If trial in this way does not succeed, let her bear strongly on the opposite rein to the leading leg, and this will tend to throw him out of his stride, and reduce him to a trot. Should this plan fail also, it is better to pull him up into the walk and commence the trot again, stopping him at once, and chiding him, if he attempts to start in the canter, and patting and encouraging him the moment he evinces a disposition to obedience.

The turn in the trot may be made with equal safety, and facility, either to the right or left, the aids of the hand, leg, and whip being applied in the same manner as in the turn in the walk.





Day & Son, Lith. to the Queen.

J. Burdall del. - F. Moun. lith.

THE CANTER

THE CANTER.

“Dark, dark are the stains on the world-loving heart,
Of which thou know’st nothing,—had’st never a part;
Thy nature can thrill at the war-trumpet sound,
And thy heart loves thy master, where’er he is found.
‘My mettlesome steed,’ I can laugh at the sneer,
And own I’ve a friend, whenever thou’rt near;
And love thee, ‘my prancing,’ my beautiful one,
While life has a throb, till my own course I’ve run!”

THE canter is, “*par excellence*,” the lady’s pace, and, when properly performed by both horse and rider, is by far the most delightful. Simple, however, as this pace appears to the uninitiated, it is purely an artificial one; though the action in itself is so extremely easy and agreeable, that even the least experienced in the art can manage to sit a quiet horse through a ride in this pace. But as the canter is generally adopted by fair equestrians, and is the pace in which an elegant and lady-like bearing is most conspicuously distinguished, its study deserves much more consideration than is usually bestowed on it.

This indifference results, in a great measure, from the very ease of the pace, which induces beginners at once to indulge in it; and,

enjoying what they of course regard as delightful canters, to jump to the conclusion that all that is necessary to be learned, is already acquired. Consequently, with only one proper mode of cantering, the variations are so numerous, as to take some time in describing, and to afford great amusement to many in their illustration.

One great reason why ladies frequently appear to such disadvantage in the canter is their not properly preparing for it. During the walk the reins may have become loose; and the horse, as commonly happens with him under such circumstances, may have been moving in a careless slovenly manner; starting then, as he thus does, without preparation, he is sure to canter equally so; and not only to exhibit himself to great disadvantage, but to prejudice the lady's appearance also. He will carry his head low, and drag the rider's hands and figure forward in an inelegant, and dangerous manner; or, in the vain desire to avoid the appearance of stooping, and to prevent the strain upon the arms, the lady will either advance the hands improperly, or relax the reins till losing all command over the horse; and, if riding with the reins in the bridle hand only, she will assuredly have the left shoulder greatly in advance of the other.

To canter properly, which is the condition of its being the delightful exercise it becomes, the rider must take her seat exactly in the centre of the saddle, with the body erect, and with a slight

bend in the back to throw the shoulders gracefully "*en arrière*," the whole figure being at the same time so perfectly pliant, and divested of stiffness, as the moment the pace is commenced, to correspond with the position, and accommodate itself to the movements of the horse.

To prepare the horse for the canter, the rider must first carefully adjust her reins, if they so require, and then with heel and whip collect and press him up to the bridle, so as to raise his fore-hand, and place him well upon his haunches.

The horse being thus properly prepared, the hands are to be slightly elevated, and, with a gentle play upon his mouth, and the application of heel and whip, he is incited to raising his fore-legs in the action of the canter.

If the horse do not immediately respond to the indication of the rider, the same means must be again applied, and with greater animation, the hand being kept sufficiently firm to prevent him from trotting. Thus he will be constrained to raise his fore-legs together, and commence the action.

The more the horse is collected in the walk, the more readily can he change to the canter, and, being already placed upon his haunches, he is in the natural position for performing the pace in an easy and stylish manner.

In the canter the horse inclines a little obliquely to one side or the other, according to the foot he is leading with ; a position which calls for a corresponding one on the part of the rider, in order to preserving the balance, and supporting the position of the horse.

If the horse leads with his right foot, he inclines a little to the left, and, in this case, the rider's body, and, consequently, her hands, must turn slightly to the left also.

If he leads with the left foot, he inclines somewhat to the right, and the rider's body and hands then take a corresponding position to the right.

The rider has also to direct the foot with which the horse leads. If carefully broken, and equally trained to canter with either leg, the horse readily obeys the hand, at once striking off with the foot on the opposite side to that to which the rider gently inclines him.

If a lady wishes her horse to canter with the right foot forward, that is, to lead with the right foot, she must, in preparing to commence the pace, slightly increase the bearing on the near rein, so as to incline him a little obliquely to the left, and take up herself the corresponding position at the same moment. Then, upon making the disposition with her hands, and with animations

of heel and whip to raise the action to the canter, the horse, from his present position, naturally leads with the right foot foremost.

The moment this is done, the feeling on both reins becomes equal, unless he canter with too great an inclination to the left, and, in this case, the rider may bend his head a little to the right, but with the greatest delicacy, so as not to cause the horse to change and lead with the opposite leg.

As the horse settles in his canter, attention must again be called to the length of the reins. Some horses, in this pace, carry their heads rather close to the neck, and, such being the case, the reins are to be slightly shortened: others again, when fairly launched in the canter, have a slight extension of the head and neck, that requires a corresponding lengthening of rein; and, it is only by nice observance of the horse's bearing that, the exact length required is duly ascertained.

A light easy feeling upon the horse's mouth must be maintained throughout the pace, that the rider may feel the cadence of every step, and be able to extend, or shorten, the action at will. If the horse flag in his movements, or hang upon the bit, his mouth must be enlivened by animating touches of the fingers on the reins, the heel and whip being applied at the same time to correct the action.

The rider must here carefully avoid bearing heavily on the reins, by which undue stress, the action of the horse becomes confined, and he is unable to canter freely, and evenly. Under such circumstances, many horses, especially in the canter, attempt to force the bridle. Here the utmost nicety of the hands must be brought into play, by quietly yielding them to him, and immediately drawing them in again, as gently, towards the waist, each time that the horse makes a strain upon the reins. With this practice properly performed, and patiently persevered in, and with the hand and reins eased to the peculiar bearing of the horse, he soon tires of his own accord, and becomes thoroughly tractable.

If the horse drop into a trot against the will of the rider, he must be collected as at first; the same disposition of hands, and the same animations of heel and whip, being employed to force him to resume the canter.

If a horse is trotting briskly at the moment in which it is desirable to change him to the canter, the lady ought first to reduce his speed in the trot, otherwise, he may change to a gallop, instead of a canter.

Ladies' horses generally canter with the right foot forward—a custom which the novice should always adopt—but no one can be considered "*au fait*" in the pace, unless able to sit perfectly at

ease, when the horse is leading with either leg. At the same time it must be understood that the horse is never to be permitted to canter with either fore leg leading at his own will, but must be subject, entirely, to the guidance of the hand.

Great advantage is derived from frequently changing the leading leg, as, by such means, the action of the one will become as easy and familiar to the rider as that of the other. Horses are so constantly ridden in the canter with the off leg leading, that frequently, when from any disturbance of the pace, or by the will of the rider, they are forced to lead with the near leg, their action becomes as awkward as that of a horse altogether unused to the pace. Hence, ladies are too prone to regard cantering with the near leg as inconvenient and disagreeable, and, consequently, to forego its practice. Yet, horses trained and accustomed to lead with either leg, in obedience to the hand, go as easily and cleverly with the one, as the other.

A horse may readily be taught to change the leading leg whilst in the canter; and some, indeed, learn to do so of themselves, according to occasion, just as in turning to the right or left. Very few, however, being trained to such a state of perfection, the lady, unless she has perfect confidence in her own skill, and in the cleverness of her horse, will find it safer to pull up into the trot, or walk, and change the leading leg out of one of these paces.

With a horse that has much cantering, it is always desirable to lead from time to time with the alternate leg. In a long ride, with a pace so purely artificial, the continual strain upon one set of muscles and sinews necessarily becomes painful and distressing to the horse himself; and also, through his going heavily in hand, brings great fatigue, and oftentimes danger, to the rider. By changing the leading leg, the horse obtains immediate relief, and canters gaily, and pleasantly again.

Horses that are imperfectly broken, and either unused to this pace, or urged to it without being properly prepared, frequently go false, and disunited. To some of my fair readers, it may be necessary to explain that a horse is said to go "false," if, in cantering to the right on a curve, he leads with the left leg, and if in cantering to the left, he leads with the right; he is "dis-united," if he leads with the opposite leg behind, to that with which he leads before.

In cantering to the right, if the horse lead with the off leg, and to the left, with the near leg, he is said to be true; and, when leading with the off leg before, he follows with the off leg behind, when with the near leg before, with the near leg behind, he is said to be united.

When a horse is united in his canter, an easy and regular action is maintained, which is agreeable alike to rider and horse; when

disunited, the action is extremely irregular, and cannot long be sustained. Besides, being most unpleasant and inconvenient, where the action is false, no less than disunited, there is not the less danger in making the turn.

A lady should, therefore, learn to distinguish without the aid of the eye, when her horse is false or disunited, so that she may at once stop, and put him off again with a true and united action. This, however, is an intelligence only to be perfectly attained by experience and practice. Beginners cannot at once be expected to know when the horse leads, or follows, with the proper leg; but if the rider take the proper position, and if the horse canter smoothly, with a slight inclination to the *opposite* side to the foot he should lead with, he may reasonably be supposed right. On the contrary, if he disobey the hand, and, cantering with a rocking motion, incline to the *same* side the rider would have him lead with, it may, with equal certainty, be inferred that the horse is wrong.

THE TURN IN THE CANTER.

In making the turn either to the right or left, the horse must be kept well up to the bridle, and be assisted both by a steady feeling of the outward rein, which should only be sufficiently relaxed to admit of an easy inclination of the horse to the side to which he is to turn, and by a stronger pressure of the outward aid,

the leg or whip, to keep the haunches from falling too much out. If the horse is turned suddenly round with the inward or leading rein only, without being properly pressed up to the bridle, or supported by the outward aid, he must turn upon his shoulders, and, for self support, change to the outward leg, in order to counteract the effect of such an uncollected turn.

The feeling on the outward rein must always be firm enough to compel the horse thoroughly to cover the ground chosen for making the turn. From this rule he ought never to be permitted to break of his own accord, nor to turn abruptly round on a more confined space.

Bearing in mind all that has been previously remarked of a horse going "false," the fair rider must be careful not to turn suddenly, or short round, to the right or left, when the horse is leading with the opposite leg; but, as a general rule under such circumstances, in order to prevent the possibility of an accident, she must pull up into the walk, and then resume the canter after the turn is made.

THE STOP IN THE CANTER.

The stop in the canter is a great test of the fair rider's skill, and, accordingly, a particular in which ladies very frequently fail. Here again the principal cause of failure is chargeable on the

absence of preparation; either the horse is not well in hand at the moment, or the rider's figure is not sufficiently erect to give her the necessary command over the horse for effecting the stop properly. Hence it frequently follows that, the moment the horse drops into a trot, the body is thrown still more forward by the sudden change of pace, and the reins become yet further relaxed. In this position, one of the following evils ensues—either the rider jolts helplessly in the saddle till the horse stops of his own accord; or she attempts to remedy the inconvenience, by drawing the bridle hand backward on the left side, with the body still inclining forward—a position so frequently seen as to present itself at once to the minds of many of my fair readers—or, in her despair, she convulsively jerks the bridle, and thus renders confusion worse confounded; for the horse, if he has a fine mouth, stops suddenly, throws up his head, and thus, by reason of the already stooping position of the rider, produces a concussion against the pommel as its inevitable result.

For stopping in the canter, the reins, if too long, should be drawn through the bridle hand to the required length, and, as the horse is bringing his fore feet to the ground, the rider's body should be gently thrown back, and the reins drawn upward towards the centre of the waist. As almost all horses will trot a few paces before halting, the moment the horse drops into a trot, the body should again slightly recede; and, with a steady bearing on the

reins, the heel and whip should be applied to press the horse up to the bridle, and cause him to stop properly on his haunches; care being taken that, on no account he ever stops short of the point required.

If the horse is well in hand, and nicely balanced on his haunches, at the time of making the stop, the movements of the body and hands must be very gentle and gradual, and nicely proportioned to the rapidity of the pace, and the obedience of the animal; without attention to these points, the horse may receive a severe shock, through being too suddenly and severely thrown upon his quarters.

THE GALLOP.

"Thus formed to speed, he challenges the wind,
And leaves the Scythian arrow far behind;
He scours along the field with loosen'd reins,
And treads so light he scarcely prints the plains."

VIRGIL (DRYDEN.)

THE "hand gallop" is merely the canter in an accelerated form, and nearly the same rules are alike applicable to both paces. The rider may incline her body rather more forward than in the canter; but must preserve the same steady position of leg, knee, and foot, in both instances.

The horse is never to be allowed to gain upon the hand, and, of his own will, to extend the speed to the full gallop, or he soon degenerates into the "runaway." The more rapid the pace, the greater is the necessity for caution. The rider should, therefore, always have her horse well in hand in the gallop, so that she may be enabled to command the stop, or reduce his speed, as pleasure or safety may require.

If the horse evince a desire to gain upon the hand, the rider must at once check the impulse, by bringing the body upright,

and each time that his fore feet come to the ground, by drawing the reins firmly, but gradually, upwards to the waist. In this way the horse dwells upon the hand for a moment or two at a time, till the lady can "pull him more together," and moderate his speed.

Should the horse, either from want of exercise, or from some sudden alarm, shew a continued disposition to break away, and extend the gallop to its utmost speed, the rider, retaining her self-possession, must preserve her seat as steadily as possible, so that no symptom of alarm, on her part, may increase the terror, or impetuosity, of the horse; and, carrying on the alternate feeling and easing of the reins at every stride, in the manner already described, she must soothe him at the same time with the voice, in order to reassure him, and to give him to understand that, there is no real danger to flee from.

A dead heavy pull at the bridle must ever be avoided, as more likely to increase, than diminish, the horse's speed, and at the same time, also, to prevent the rider's having sufficient command of the horse's mouth, or of her own hands, as to guide him from running against anything which might come in his course.

If the horse still resist the hand, the rider must then resort to more determined measures. She must sit well back, bear heavily on each rein alternately, and make a kind of sawing motion on

the horse's mouth, which usually has the desired effect of bringing him up in a few minutes. Should this fail, the reins may be slackened for an instant, when, with her full power, and her body thrown well back, they may be suddenly snatched upwards, great care being at the same time taken, that the horse, by stopping suddenly, does not throw the lady violently forward on the head of the saddle.

Whatever be the way in which the horse is stopped in the gallop, it must be the rider's chief concern, that he never become so disunited by the operation, as to have no escape from falling.

When the gallop extends to speed, it is highly imprudent to turn, except in a large space. If the horse, however, has so far the mastery of the hand, as to turn of his own will, the rider, with a determined feeling of the outward rein, must throw herself quickly into the balance; and, in the same degree in which the horse bends, or leans inwards, in the same direction, also, must she incline her own body; else, from the suddenness and violence of the turn, she will be in danger of being thrown off on the opposite side.

The extension of the horse in full gallop, and the rider's consequent inability to stop him at the moment, or within some given space, clearly shew the danger and impropriety of such riding on a public road.

It cannot here be too strongly impressed on the mind of the young equestrian, that, in the majority of instances, horses run away through being allowed, or urged, to going too suddenly out of the canter into the full gallop. They, consequently, become so excited, as utterly to defy the rider's power over them; and, not unfrequently, are the means of taking from her, that presence of mind, which is of such vital importance on critical occasions like the present.

THE CIRCLE.

“ And when to full four springs his years advance,
Teach him to run the ring, with pride to prance,
And, rightly managed, equal time to beat,
To turn, to bound in measure, and curvet.”

VIRGIL (DRYDEN).

THE exercise of the circle greatly assists both in confirming the seat and balance of the rider, and in perfecting her in the use of the hands, and the aids of the body, left leg, and whip.

The circle is practised in any convenient open space, with the same facility, as in a riding house. A piece of ground one hundred and twenty feet long, and fifty feet broad, is large enough for the purpose; and to this space, during exercise, the novice must be strictly confined, as the hands, and the other aids, will then be in constant requisition, and practice.

While moving round a circle, in order to preserve the poise of his body, the horse must necessarily lean inwards, proportionately to the size of the circle, and to the speed with which he is made to move upon it. The rider must of course conform to that

inclination, and partake of it, or the equilibrium of both will be disturbed, and the power of retaining the seat be lost.

The aids are to be applied in the proportion, and according to the effect, the rider means to produce. The greatest exactness, uniformity, and delicacy being observed in the execution.

To give the novice an idea of the careful attention demanded for the foregoing practice, let her imagine a circle of thirty yards in diameter, and the number of circles, that can be described, within so large a circumference. Precisely as are the circles, so many are the degrees of operation, which these aids have to perform. In working a horse upon a circle of thirty yards diameter, the delicacy of these aids, owing to the largeness of the area, is scarcely, if at all, perceivable; and yet, without such appliances, the horse would naturally, and as certainly, work on a straight line. We thus see how susceptible and obedient is the horse to the slightest touch; for, while a proper correspondence between the hand and mouth are maintained, the latter is alive to a mere hairbreadth's alteration of position.

The degree of aids is determined and directed by the eye. Thus: the eye traverses about three or four yards before the horse on the ground intended to be gone over; the body presents itself to the direction of the eye; the hand in its proper situation moves

with it; and, when deviating but one half inch from the line, directs the horse off the line in that self same proportion. The more the circles are contracted, by so much the more is the eye, of course, in traversing the ground, directed to the side to which the horse is working. It is, consequently, the body and hand which, presenting themselves in that direction, give the proportionate degree of aid required.

Let the circle then at first be formed on a scale of half, or even less than half, of that already supposed—say from twelve to fifteen yards in diameter—and the horse be made to move on it for some days at a walk.

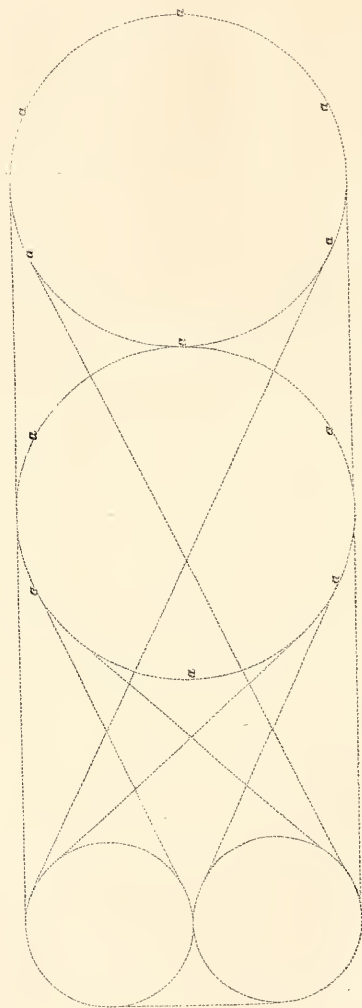
In riding round a circle, the inward rein is to be rather lower than the outward one, and the circle is to be commenced by the rider leading off the horse with the inward rein, in such a manner that she can see the inward eye.

The inward rein must be delicately acted upon; if it be jerked at distant intervals, or borne upon without intermission, it will, in the former case, make the horse swerve in and out; and, in the latter, the rider's hand and the animal's mouth will both, in some degree, part with their fineness of perception, and with their exquisite correspondence. In order to ensure correct action, the inward rein should be borne on in a very slight degree, and yielded

the next instant alternately ;—the hand keeping exact time in its operations with the cadence of the horse's feet,—while the horse is, at the same time, supported both by the outward rein, and by the aid of leg or whip when required, to prevent his swerving from the required line.

For the novice to ascertain that her hand and aids are correct, she ought at first to have some mark by which her own eye may be directed, but not that of the horse, or he will follow the track of his own accord, and thus render it impossible for the rider to discover the truth of her own aids. Therefore, having ground which is free from marks of its own, let her have four or five of them placed upon the circle, of such a description as neither to obstruct the horse, nor to fly up and startle him, and then endeavour to pass directly over each mark—she will thus learn how nearly she can work ; but, the task being far from easy in the commencement, she must not be discouraged if she fail of accomplishing her wish immediately.

The rider is not to confine herself to working on one unvaried circle, as this not only becomes irksome, but brings the horse into soon working it by rote. After a short time, therefore, she should begin to ride in double circles, which are at first, of considerable diameter, but which decrease as she improves. Riding in double circles is guiding the horse to perform a figure of 8 ; and this,



in the language of the riding house, is called "effecting the large and narrow change," according to the size of the circles. The number of the circles may be increased, and their sizes varied with great advantage, the rider from time to time diversifying her track, and changing her ground, by guiding her horse diagonally from one circle, or point of a circle, to another. Thus, the horse will never be aware of the rider's intention, except through the truth and correctness of her aids.

The accompanying "plate" more clearly describes the lines to work on. The intersection of the circles, and the termination of the diagonal lines, are the points where the ground is to be changed from one circle to another. The letters *a* are the marks for directing the rider to the ground, and for discovering the correctness of the performance.

If the horse do not readily obey the hand, he is to be forced up to the bridle by an animation of the leg, and whip, which, in the commencement, should be as gentle as possible, no less out of regard to the sensitiveness of the horse, than that the novice may keep her ground, and change smoothly, without breaking the time. She may then attempt a brisker action and higher animation, but always with due regard to the accuracy of the performance.

After a few days' practice on the just mentioned plan, the rider

may begin to circle at a trot, and finally at a canter: the exercise being at first practised with both hands, and subsequently effected with one.

The rider must never forget that, although she may change safely to the right or left in the walk, or trot, in the canter, she must so manage as always to circle to the right, when the horse is leading with the off leg, and to the left, when he is leading with the near leg. This distinction a glance at the "plate" will prove, as one, which, by varying the turning point, can be accomplished with ease and infinite variety.

THE LEAP.

“Throw the broad ditch behind you; o’er the hedge
High bound, resistless; nor the deep morass
Refuse.”

THOMPSON.

It is not absolutely necessary for a lady to learn to leap, so that the matter may be left purely to her own inclination; for, unless she aspires to the “pleasures of the chace,” no occasion may ever arise to call for the exercise of leaping. At the same time, the knowing how to leap possesses many advantages, among which may be mentioned, her being better enabled to sit a vicious and restive horse, and to maintain her seat upon one that is prone to shy—the motion of a horse in kicking, plunging, or rearing, resembling in a great measure that of leaping. It is generally remarked that, ladies who like leaping, and possess the requisite nerve, almost invariably excel in this exercise—indeed, there appears to be with them no medium—they leap either very well, or not at all; and it need scarcely be added, that instances of the former are far from numerous, from the absence of both practice and nerve.

The many evil consequences resulting from the practice, both to

the inexperienced and the timid, not merely in falls, but in—what is more serious—their being thrown violently forward on the saddle, has always made me scrupulous of advising ladies to leap, unless I know them to be naturally inclined to it, or I am well assured of their having previously acquired such perfect knowledge and skill in the management of themselves and their steeds, as to perform this feat with safety ;—not that there is any difficulty either in leaping, or in learning to leap, but so few ladies are sufficiently instructed, and others do not naturally possess the nerve and confidence required for practising it successfully.

In teaching to leap, a bar or hurdle from two to three feet in height, and a ditch from two to four feet in breadth, are all that is called for ; it not being necessary with the majority of ladies to incur more risk, by increasing the size of the leap. As scarcely two horses ever leap exactly alike, it is far better practice to change the horse from time to time. It is, moreover, a well ascertained fact, that if a rider can accomplish a moderate leap satisfactorily in cool blood, she is fully equal to more extended performances if pleasure or necessity require them. Still, with ladies, whose skill and proficiency in the art, are equalled only by their confidence, and the delight taken in the exercise, such achievements, when called for, and, of course, under the exercise of sound judgment, need be limited only by the capabilities of their steeds.

Leaps are taken either standing, or flying. The standing leap, which is usually the first practised, is taken from the halt, close to the fence. The flying leap is taken from some animated pace, and is much easier to sit than the standing leap, although the latter is considered the safer of the two to begin with, since the steadiness with which it is made by a properly broken horse enables a master, or friend, to assist the novice, on the slightest appearance of danger.

The sitting a leap well is entirely dependent upon the just balance of the body, by which is understood, the weight so correctly thrown into the saddle as to meet the movements of the horse.

No weight is to be borne in the stirrup, as pressure on the stirrup evidently tends to raise the body, rather than keep it down in the saddle. It also takes away from the left knee, the power of closing against the side of the saddle, no less than of loosening the hold of the right knee on the pommel, and of removing the pressure of the right leg against the fore-flap of the saddle. Further, it prevents the rider from using the "leaping head" effectually, if she ride with one.

In the standing leap, as the horse comes to the fence, the body keeps its ordinary upright position ; as he rises, it inclines forward

to maintain the balance; and as he springs from his hind legs, the body must incline backward, till the hind feet meet the ground again.

The horse is to be brought up straight, and steadily to the leap, at an animated walk, the reins separated, and the hands kept quite low. On arriving at the fence, he is to be lightly halted upon his haunches. A light pressure of the leg and whip to his sides, and of the fingers upon the reins, then invites him to rise. In so doing, the reins are to be felt only just so much as to prevent their becoming slack, the rider yielding her hands freely as he springs forward, to give the horse at that moment full liberty to extend himself. When the hind feet come to the ground, the horse is again collected by the hands resuming their former position, and by a pressure of the leg and whip, both to force him up to the bridle, and to urge him forward at the same pace at which he moved prior to being halted for the leap.

The hands, as already observed, must be kept low, this being a most essential point, though with difficulty impressed on inexperienced and timid riders, whose general tendency is to raise the hands; and fear is mainly the promoter of this action, the hands being raised, either with the intention of holding on by the bridle, or of making the horse rise at the leap. So great at times is the apprehension of novices that the horse will not clear the fence

with his fore legs, that they take leave of their common sense, and so foolishly put faith in the virtue of their own hands, as almost to defy one who has hold of these to keep them down. Consequently, as regards the horse, his head and nose are so raised out of place, and his neck so straitened, that it is impossible for him to gather himself for the rise, till he has again dropped his nose, and curved his neck, and this the hands in that situation have hindered him from doing. If the rider, not being sensible of the impropriety, nor foreseeing the danger of so doing, urge her horse in this position to leap, the latter, not being able to leap as he ought, leaps as he can, and the result is an awkward short leap of all four legs together, which is unpleasant, and dangerous alike to horse and rider.

So far I have considered only the impediment offered to the horse by this improper position of the hands, let us now come to its tendency of unseating the rider. If the body be fully thrown back, with the hands raised as described, the rider then necessarily checks her horse, and hinders him covering the leap. This restraint the horse quickly perceives, and therefore he prepares himself to force the hand,—as a consequence, the rider is pulled violently forward upon the head of the saddle, and further is in imminent danger of being thrown completely off, by the shock received in the horse's feet again meeting the ground. That the fair reader may the more easily convince herself of the truth of this fact, let her as

the horse stands still, place her hands low, leaning the body back; and she will find that she can do so without any great disturbance to the horse, but rather giving him a proper support, and also making it impossible for him to force her body forward. On the contrary, without altering the length of the reins, let her raise the hands, and lean the body back, when she will at once discover that the latter cannot go back without checking the horse, and that, in this situation, the hands must be forced by him, in order to covering his leap.

The next important point for the fair rider's consideration is, the position of the body. As the horse rises at the leap, the body, as before observed, must incline forward to preserve the balance. Were the body to hang back as the horse rises before, it is obvious that the weight must rest entirely upon his mouth, and thus not only prevent his leaping, but it will perhaps cause him to fall backward upon the rider. In bringing the body forward, great attention must be given to having the waist well advanced, and the shoulders properly thrown back; for, if the body is brought forward with a round back and shoulders, it is not in a position to get back in time comfortably; but, with the waist well advanced, and the shoulders thrown back with ease, the body, as the horse springs forward, of itself, naturally inclines backward, unless the hands are raised to prevent it. If the body is not at that moment inclined well back, it is sure to be thrown forward by the shock

received, when the horse's feet meet the ground; and thus, not only is the rider brought into danger, but the horse is deprived of the support which at this moment he expects from the hand.

If the horse go impatiently to the leap, he is to be halted, and reined back, or turned round, until he can be brought coolly up to it; if he is allowed to "rush" at the fence, he becomes an unsafe, as well as an uncertain leaper. At the same time, the horse may be too much collected previously to his leap, in which case he is apt to bound, or, as it is commonly termed, "buck over"—a movement that is very likely to unseat a novice. The degree in which a horse should be collected or animated, entirely depends upon the temperament of the animal; and of this most important particular, a knowledge can only be obtained by experience and practice.

In the flying leap, the seat has to be preserved in the same manner as in the standing one, except that in the former it is needless—nay, highly imprudent—to advance the body as the horse rises, for the spring from the hind legs immediately following will in that case hinder the body's getting back in time. Moreover, in the flying leap, the horse's position, especially in a low leap, is more horizontal than when rising at a fence from the halt; and, consequently, if the horse suddenly check himself, and refuse the leap, he may throw the rider over in her leaning forward. Let the hands

then be kept down, the waist brought forward, and the body permitted to take that backward inclination which is produced by the springing forward of the horse, without its being allowed to regain an upright position, until the horse's hind feet shall have come to the ground.

The horse is to be guided straight to the leap, the rider yielding her hands gradually as he advances. From ten to fifteen yards is the proper distance for a horse to run prior to taking the leap. If the horse leap willingly and cleverly, he may be allowed to take his own pace to the fence, and he will be sure to spring from the just distance. When he is well over the leap and coming to the ground, he has to be supported by the hand, but this support must be afforded with great nicety, as the horse regards a sudden or violent check upon the reins as a punishment, and probably refuses his next leap.

An indolent horse requires to be animated, and urged by strong aids to make the leap; but no horse, however, must be *flurried* into taking the spring, or he may miss his proper distance, and may make the leap hap-hazard, to the extreme peril of his rider. If the horse shews unwillingness to take the leap, and attempts to swerve right or left, the rider, with a light and ready hand, must keep his head steady and straight to the fence, till she firmly, yet kindly, compels him to clear it. Great forbearance and patience are frequently required in so doing, and there cannot be too profuse

encouragement, since nothing is more distasteful to the horse in general, than being forced to leap over an obstacle without the excitement of company, and example. Let this be well borne in mind, for indiscretion in this particular has been serious in its results to many, and fatal to some.

The novice, when properly instructed in the flying leap, may attempt the double, or "in and out leap," which differs in no respect from the standing, or the flying leap. Greater adroitness in adapting the position of the body to the movements of the horse, and greater readiness in the use of the hands, and in application of the aids, are however necessarily called for; because the horse makes a second leap the very moment that he has concluded the first, the hind feet having no sooner reached the ground in the first leap than the fore legs rise again in the second.

For practising the double leap, the rails or hurdles should vary from eighteen to thirty inches in height.

A horse that jumps freely, or, commonly speaking, that "carries his rider in his mouth," is the best for a novice, provided always that he neither rushes, nor pulls hard.

The assisting and lifting a horse at a leap may be practised by experienced riders, but must never be attempted by beginners :

it is impossible for the latter to know when, and to what extent, aid may be given; and, in the aim, they are far more likely to deter the horse from taking the leap, than to assist him in making it.

CRITICAL SITUATIONS.

"The courser pawed the ground with restless feet,
And snorting, foamed, and champed the golden bit."

DRYDEN.

I HAVE already remarked, that a lady should never, if in her power to avoid it, ride a horse addicted to any vice, or one having a fault likely to endanger her safety. Nevertheless, she ought to be armed at all points, and prepared for all emergencies. After years of good behaviour, the most quiet horse may exhibit symptoms of vice, even without apparent cause. The best tempered animals are not faultless, nor the most sure-footed guaranteed from falling; it is wise, therefore, never to be surprised by any accident or infirmity whatever.

Of the different forms of restiveness manifested by the horse, that of stopping and turning suddenly round is the most common. The horse usually commences his attack by turning short round to the *right*, where he takes the rider at the greatest disadvantage, few being so powerful with the left, as with the right, hand. He instinctively discovers which is the weaker side, and designedly attacks this.

The turn is generally made with such force and suddenness as to put it out of the rider's power to prevent it, however prepared she may be for the attack. Indeed, it is both vain and unwise to make the attempt; for the rider may be assured both of being herself foiled, and of her horse taking courage, from his success in the struggle, to repeat his endeavours to have his own way.

Instead then of trying to hinder him with the left hand, let the rider rather attack him with the right, and pull him completely round in that direction, till his head presents itself the same way that she was originally going. Thus the horse finds to his astonishment that he has gained no point, and is precisely in the place from which he started. At this moment, an application of the heel, and whip, may be made for urging him forward, though it but rarely succeeds. He generally turns again, and the rider, after the fashion of the horse, still attacking the unguarded side, must pull him right round two or three times successively, letting the heel, and whip, if necessary, assist the hand. Great care must be taken while she is thus occupied, to preserve her balance, by an inclination of the body to the centre of the circle, described by the horse's head in his evolution.

Some horses, finding themselves thus baffled, soon yield, others make a more determined resistance. If the horse still refuse to advance as the rider wishes, he must be studiously prevented from

going any other way; and, as the whip at such a moment only increases his obstinacy, or makes him rear, or run away in another direction, her mode of attack must be immediately changed, by turning him round, and reining him backward, until he shews a disposition to advance.

It must be a uniform rule with the rider, never to contend with her horse on that point which he is prepared to defend. Her efforts, on the contrary, are to be directed to his weaker side; for the more he fortifies himself in one place, by so much the more are his powers of defence diminished in another. Thus, if a horse sets himself against going forward, he is easily compelled backward. When obstinately refusing to go to the right, the rider, owing to the manner in which the horse's body and limbs are disposed, can with the greatest facility turn him round to the left. When standing stock-still, and setting at defiance all the rider's endeavours to move him, his defence may still be converted into a punishment, by her sitting patiently on his back, without making any effort to move him, and by keeping him in that position some short time after he himself evinces a desire to move forward. Nothing so soon subdues, or disheartens a horse, as this mode of turning his attacks against himself, and of making his defences appear acts of obedience to the rider's inclination and will.

In these contests with the horse, the rider must be perfectly

calm and collected, with the eye well directed to the surrounding objects, lest she be thrust into some awkward situation; which through inattention she may become of her own accord, without the least design on the part of the horse. Frequently, however, the horses themselves leave no effort untried to place their riders in these situations, by sidling to other horses, carriages, walls, &c., as the case may be. Here again the mode of attack, already advised, enables the rider at the same time both to defeat the intentions of the horse, and to secure her own safety. Inexperienced riders naturally enough, at first, endeavour to pull the horse away from the object; but they soon find, not only that their exertions are unavailing, but that they are themselves unknowingly inviting the horse, if the object be upon the near side, to crush their knees against it. The instant, therefore, that a rider perceives her horse viciously sidling to any object, instead of striving to pull him away from it, she must with all her might bend his head towards it. By these means she places the side of the horse next the object in a concave position, and so frustrates all his efforts of doing her any injury. And, as this position of the head soon compels him to direct his quarters outward, she may then back him away from the object in perfect safety.

Whenever the rider feels her horse disposed to vice, she must prepare herself for the encounter, by separating the reins, and by keeping the body upright, yet so flexible as readily to accompany

every action of the horse, and repel every effort he may make against her.

Of all the defences which a horse makes, that of *rearing* is the most dangerous; his rise being oftentimes so rapid, and unexpected, that the rider cannot anticipate his intentions, and sometimes so high, as to endanger his own falling backwards. Fortunately, a horse which rears to this extreme seldom or never kicks, the rider has therefore principally to guard against his rearing.

When a horse rears, the rider must immediately cease bearing on the reins, and incline her body well forward, so as to throw its weight upon his shoulders, and oblige him to come down. Having recovered her position gradually in his descent, she must, as his fore feet are nearing the ground, apply a smart stroke or two of the whip *behind* the saddle, having due regard to preserving her balance, should the horse plunge forward after being corrected. It must ever be borne in mind—for her life may depend upon the observance—that she is never to touch the horse with the whip, or bear upon the reins, or press with the heel, while he is up and rising, else he will rear more violently than he otherwise would have done, and, possibly, so high as inevitably to fall backward. Upon the horse's coming to the ground, she must also be especially careful not to bear upon his mouth too suddenly, or he will be incited to rise again.

If the horse shews himself disposed to rear again, or whenever the rider perceives his intention of doing so, at that very moment she must slacken one rein, and bend him with the other, keeping her hand low. This bend compels him to move a hind leg, which motion, throwing him off his balance, of necessity brings him to descend. She must then immediately turn him round two or three times, to divert him from his object, and reduce him to obedience.

If the horse rears very high, the rider may assist her balance by holding with the bridle-hand on the horse's mane; and, all possible bearing being thus taken from the horse's mouth, the danger of his falling backward is considerably diminished. If the horse fight with his fore feet, throwing them out to the front, but little danger is to be apprehended, unless the heaviness of the rider's hand pulls him over. If, on the contrary, as the horse rises he bend his fore legs and feet under him, the danger is imminent; for, with the lightest hand, and the best seat in the world, such a horse is likely to come over, and crush his rider in the fall.

A horse that is given to rearing, even in its least troublesome form, is altogether unfitted for a lady's use; and the sooner such an animal is parted with, and sent to some more kindred occupation, the better for both parties.

A horse that is addicted to *kicking* must be kept well in hand;

for, if his head be fairly sustained, he cannot do much mischief with his heels. The moment a horse shews a tendency to kicking, the rider should snatch his head up sharply, and chide him at the same time with the voice. If he continue to kick, she must keep her seat firmly; sit back, with her hands raised to keep the horse's head well up, and punish his mouth severely with the bit every time that he attempts to kick, or get his head down. The hands, though raised, are not to pull at the horse, unless he makes an effort to force the hand. Liberty to go forward he must have, but not the liberty to get his head down. On the other hand, the great point is to keep his head up as much as possible; which, if done, takes away the power to kick, there being a point of elevation at which it is impossible for the horse to lift both hind legs at the same time: he is thus soon compelled to yield to the constraint of the position, and the punishment of the bit.

If the horse kick while obstinately standing still, the rider must, in the same manner, get his head up to the utmost of her power, and try the effect of some smart strokes of the whip on his *shoulder*; then, watching a favourable opportunity, twist him round a few times till his astonishment, and confusion at the novelty of his treatment, gets the mastery over his contentious spirit.

A rider should always endeavour to ascertain, as soon as possible, that the kicking does not proceed from anything wrong in the

saddle. A hard or ill-fitting saddle frequently causes the most docile animal to kick, and always aggravates the vice in one that is disposed to so doing.

It is fortunate that very few horses, under proper management, ever *plunge* violently after their first breaking. The best tempered horse, however, will sometimes plunge, to relieve himself of the pain he endures from a badly fitting saddle, or from girths too tightly drawn. So exhausting to the horse is the action in plunging, that it is soon abandoned, if he fail in throwing his rider, or bursting his girths. When a horse plunges, he gets his head down, sets up his back, swells his body to burst his girths, and kicks and plunges till he can hold out no longer; but, after six or eight plunges, he generally becomes quite spent.

Through these plunges the rider must keep her seat as firmly as possible—which is, confessedly, not always an easy matter—and be much on her guard that the horse, in getting his head down, does not pull her body forward. If the horse plunge from either of the causes before mentioned, and not from vice, instead of chiding, she must speak to him kindly, and encouragingly, but not timidly. There is no danger of the horse's rearing. The rider, therefore, has only to keep her body back, with a strong bearing on the reins to prevent him throwing himself down, which is but too likely to happen, if he get his head entirely loose.

A horse that is prone to *shy* may, in many cases, be prevented from starting, by his head being turned a little away from those objects which are known, by experience, as likely to alarm him. The moment anything unusual is seen or heard approaching, the rider must be upon the "*qui vive*," and incline the horse's head gently from the object, that he may pass it, as far as possible, unobserved. If, at the same time, she touch him lightly with the heel or whip on the same side to which she inclines him, and speak kindly and playfully to him, his attention will be further diverted from the object.

If he shy at any stationary object which he has to pass, and, from fear, turn suddenly round, as in cases in which a horse does so through restiveness, let the rider first turn him completely round, and then soothe, and encourage him to approach and pass the cause of his alarm. By coaxing, a horse may be encouraged to go up to the object of his dislike, and so beneficial an effect be thus produced that, the horse, discovering how groundless have been his fears, is less given to starting from any similar cause in future.

If the horse, swerving from an object, attempt to fly rapidly past it, striving to pull him towards it is alike useless, and imprudent; for, even if the rider succeed in bringing his head to that side, she may, in so doing, prevent his seeing what is before

him, and so cause him to run out of an imaginary danger into a real one. It is far better to let him go forward, the rider keeping her eyes to the front, so as to guide him from running against anything in that direction; and gradually, yet firmly, reining him in, she, by her own composure, shows the total absence of cause for apprehension.

The rider must always have a watchful hand upon a horse that is at all prone to shy. She cannot then be taken at a great disadvantage; for the slightest symptom of alarm upon the part of the horse is at once communicated to the hand, where the eye may fail of immediately discovering the grievance, but with this organ instantly directed to the horse's ears, both hand and body are prepared to act as the movements of the horse may require.

A horse is easily restored to confidence by kindness and judicious management, but punishment for shying, so far from quickly allaying his fears, does but tend to increase his sensitiveness. He is apt to shy again at the first strange object that presents itself, and then to add another start on the instant, in anticipation of the chastisement that awaits him.

Under the heading of this chapter *stumbling* also must be comprised. If a horse is in the habit of stumbling, either from infirmity, or from some peculiar formation, the greatest attention is demanded

of the rider for always having him well in hand, so that, upon the slightest intimation of a stumble, she may immediately throw her body back, and, by raising her own hands, at the same time raise his head and forehead. This must be the work of an instant, executed before the horse is too much off his balance, if not, it will be beyond her power to recover him. Not all the care in the world can secure a horse of this description from stumbling, nor, at all times, hinder him from falling; hence, as before observed, the impropriety of such animals ever being ridden by ladies.

It is not less an absurd, than an useless, practice to punish a horse for stumbling, for clearly the poor animal would not run the risk of breaking his own knees if he could avoid doing so. Whipping either distracts his attention from recovering himself, or induces him the moment he has recovered himself, to fly forward in a hurried and disunited manner, and to risk a more serious stumble—nay, perhaps a fall, before regaining his self-possession.

A young horse, however good his formation, unless he has been both well broken, and well ridden, often goes too forward on his shoulders; and, if highly couraged, is apt to “over-step himself,” and frequently to “touch with his toe.” The excellence of his formation, and his natural activity, enable him to recover himself immediately, generally without the assistance of his rider. With a horse of this class a light check is all that is necessary upon such

occasions ; but even with an animal thus favourably formed, this habit is not, at all times, unattended with danger ; and the rider must use all means to break him of it. For this purpose, with a light hand, she must keep him more together by raising his forehead, and with gentle touches of the heel and whip, by pressing his haunches well forward, and under him. He then necessarily goes more within himself, and is compelled to raise and bend the knee, so as to deliver the foot in the air, in such a manner as to ensure its coming flatly and evenly to the ground.

A horse that is free from defect of form, and that has been carefully suppld, and nicely balanced on his haunches, can scarcely make a mistake. It is, of course, impossible to say but that at some moment, and from some unforeseen cause, a false step may be made, or even a fall ; but the chances of the latter are so remote that, with ordinary precaution on the part of the rider, such an animal may always be ridden with equal safety and pleasure.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

“Full of wise saws and modern instances.”—SHAKESPEARE.

DEMOSTHENES on being asked what was the first point in oratory, replied—action; what the second?—action; what the third?—action. Had the same energizing Grecian been catechised, in this way, as to his opinion of a horse, with all his eloquence, he could not have used the words more pointedly; for here, supremely, action is everything, and, without it, the finest form is of small value. It must, however, in justice be admitted, that we do not often find very fine shape and make unaccompanied by it. “A judge may form some idea of what a horse is before mounting, from the position of those two most essential points—the shoulders and hind legs,—for, if they are not in their proper places, true action is looked for in vain. It is impossible for a horse to carry his rider pleasantly, without good lengthy shoulders, and well bent hind-legs. A friend of mine, whose judgment at times borders on fastidiousness, goes so far as to say that, with straight hind-legs no horse can have a good mouth. He is correct to this point, that no horse with straight hind-legs can “pull together;” therefore, neither his head nor his heels can be where they ought to be.”—NIMROD.

To obtain the light, smooth, and easy action so essential in a lady's horse, the primary objects are deep oblique shoulders, and well bent hind-legs. This angular construction of the limbs has been not unaptly compared to the similar arrangement of the springs of a carriage, and the ease of motion, and almost perfect freedom from jolting, which are thence obtained.

“The oblique shoulder not only gives extensive action, but facility of action also. The point of the shoulder being projected forward, the legs or pillars which support the fore part of the horse are likewise placed proportionably forward, and, having less weight to carry are exposed to less concussion, especially concussion in rapid action. The horse is thus altogether safer also; for, having less weight lying before the pillars of support, he is not so likely to have the centre of gravity thrown before and beyond them by an accidental trip; in other words, he is less likely to fall; and he rides the more pleasantly, from there being far less weight to bear on, and fatigue the hand of the rider. It likewise happens, unfortunately, that nature, as if to compensate the deficiency of action and power in an upright shoulder, has accumulated on it more muscle, and, therefore, the upright shoulder becomes proverbially thick and cloddy, and the muscles of the breast which were designed to strengthen the attachment of the shoulders to the chest, and bind them together, must, when the point of the shoulder lies backward, and under the horse, be proportionably

thickened and strengthened, and the horse is thus still more heavy before, more unpleasant, and more unsafe to ride."—YOUATT.

Although in their action the hind legs escape much of the concussion to which the fore legs are exposed,—the weight of the body being never thrown violently upon them—yet a horse with straight hind legs cannot have good hough action; and, therefore, his paces, and especially his canter, fails of being smooth and even. In addition to the difficulty, and, in many cases, impossibility of placing him properly on his haunches, by uniting him, or "pulling him together," this straightness of limb renders an animal so formed totally unfit to carry a lady.

"If there be one thing more than any other, in which the possessor, and, in his own estimation, at least, the tolerable judge of the horse, is in error, it is the *action* of the road horse. 'Let him lift his legs well,' it is said, 'and he will never come down.' In proportion, however, as he lifts his legs well, will be the force with which he puts them down again; the jar and concussion to the rider; and the battering and wear and tear of the feet. A horse with too great 'knee action' will not always be speedy; he will be rarely pleasant to ride, and he will not, in the long run, be safer than others. The careless *daisy cutter*, however pleasant on the turf, should indeed be avoided, unless the neck of the rider be previously insured; yet it is a rule, not often understood, and

sometimes disputed, but which experience will fully confirm,—that the safety of the horse depends a great deal more on the manner in which he puts his feet down, than on that in which he lifts them up,—more on the foot being placed at once flat on the ground, or perhaps the heel coming first in contact with it, than on the highest and most splendid action. * When the toe first touches the ground, it may be easily supposed that the horse will occasionally topple over. An unexpected obstacle will throw the centre of gravity forward, and down he will come. If the toe dig into the ground before the foot is firmly placed, a little thing will cause a trip and a fall.”—YOUTT.

“ Perhaps it may not be generally known that, a horse may go very near the ground, and never make a trip; and that another may lift his knee almost to his nose, and yet be an arrant tumble-down. Lifting up the leg, or what the London people call the “knee-up action,” has nothing to do with a horse going safe on the road. It is not on the *taking up* of the foot, but on the *putting of it down*, that the safety of a horse’s action depends. Man walks very near the ground, but seldom strikes it with his toe. Follow him over a path where the snow is deep enough to trace him, and you will immediately perceive that he strikes the snow with his heel, but scarcely ever with his toe. If he did, he would constantly be injuring himself, and would soon become a cripple. The action of a man proceeds from his hips; whereas that of a horse, as far as his

fore-legs are concerned, is from his shoulders ; but the principle is the same with each—each is a piece of curiously wrought mechanism ; and according to the correctness of that mechanism is the action true.”—NIMROD.

Having said so much for the horse, let me here take occasion to repeat my advice to the fair rider to exercise due judgment in the selection of her Habit Maker.

If a lady is obliged at any time to borrow a side-saddle, or to use one that she is not accustomed to, let it be a great point with her to ascertain that it is of sufficient length from the pommel to the cantle ; for, if too short for her figure, she may be greatly inconvenienced by having to sit, through a long ride, on the edge of the cantle.

Before commencing a ride, it should be an invariable practice to adjust the reins carefully, and collect the horse properly, that, on starting, the lady may have him under perfect command.

If two or more ladies are about to ride together, as soon as each is placed properly in the saddle, let her move forward sufficiently to be out of the way of the others, and then keep her horse perfectly quiet, that he may not render the other horses impatient, and unsteady, during the time of their being mounted. In joining any

other party on horseback, the rider should always guardedly place her horse in such a position as to avoid the risk of injury, if either kicks. A lady, accompanied by a gentleman, always rides on the near side.

It is an excellent rule at starting, always to begin gently, as the majority of accidents occur from the excitement of horses, who are often too highly animated by the riders immediately after their leaving the stable.

The etiquette of the road prescribes the rider's being always on the near side, but to pass anything going in the same direction as herself, she must be on the off side, taking care to make the change at a moment when there is ample room for the purpose.

Great caution is to be exercised in turning, in order to avoid the risk of collision with any other object. In approaching a turn, where, from its position, the rider is unable immediately to ascertain if anything is in her road, or coming from an opposite direction, she must always go gently, taking ample room, keeping her own side, and having her horse well in hand to be prepared for any emergency.

In riding up hill, the bridle hand is to be extended freely, and the body advanced to throw the weight upon the horse's shoulders.

If the ascent is very steep, the rider may steady herself by holding with the bridle-hand upon the horse's mane, but on no account on the pommel or head of the saddle; else, at such a moment, from the position of the horse, the saddle may shift backward, perhaps turn round, and so endanger the life of the rider.

In going down hill, the rider must have a light and fine feeling of the horse's mouth, and incline the body well back to throw the weight upon the horse's hind quarters—thus she relieves the shoulders, for the more easy performance of their own especial task. The hand must be sufficiently yielded to enable the horse to step out freely, and put down his foot firmly. Inexperienced and timid riders are very apt to make a mistake in this respect, and to support the horse's head too high, and confine him in such a manner as renders his step uncertain and unsafe. In an excellent work on "Horsemanship," written some fifty years ago, the author makes the following admirable observations upon this article:—
"A gentleman whom I had taught to ride, and broke his horse, asked me with some degree of alarm, if I had ever found his horse to stumble, or go unsafe. On my answering in the negative, he requested I would ride his horse with him; and he took me to a hill, not a very steep one, and said, 'We'll walk down this hill,' which, when done, he was surprised that his horse did not stumble; for he rode him the day before down this same hill, and was apprehensive the horse would fall every step, and wished to know if I

could account for it, which I explained to him, and it may be of use to others to know likewise. This gentleman happened to be in years, and consequently rode timidly or cautiously—not but many young men, at their first riding, have like careful apprehensions. The horse's body, in descending a hill, partakes of a like declivity, and the rider's body preserving a perpendicular, the horse's head appears so remote as though he was going to fall; this induces the timid rider to hold fast by the bridle, and support the horse's head as high as possible; the consequence is, when the horse extends his fore feet to walk in the usual way, it does not firmly reach the ground till he makes a drop from the other—and this not only appears as though the horse is going to fall, but is likely to make him fall. Now, a horse to walk on level ground should have his head, or he cannot step out freely, and it is impossible he should, going down a hill; therefore, I informed my friend, he must give the horse his head in walking down a hill, and not expect that the horse's body can preserve a horizontal, as his does a perpendicular, when going down a declivity. If you have apprehensions of your horse, you must keep a more watchful hand upon him; but I do not recollect a circumstance of a horse falling with me going down a hill, and the danger is not equal to the appearance."

Except on such occasions as going up an ascent, or a horse's rearing—in which cases it is necessary to yield the hand entirely to him—the rider should always feel the mouth lightly. "Every horse,

from some cause or other, is liable to fall, and hence the golden rule—*never trust to your horse*. He who constantly pulls might and main is much in the wrong: he soon spoils his horse's mouth, and thus creates for himself the very work which it is the object of his pulling to prevent: he does worse who carelessly throws the reins on the horse's neck. *Always feel the mouth lightly*; you will thus be able to give the animal assistance *immediately*, before he is too much off his centre, and when a little check will save him. By this continuous and gentle feeling, you likewise induce him to carry his head well, than which few things are more conducive to the beautiful, safe, and easy going of the horse."—YOUATT.

The hand must always be active, and attentive to the movements of the horse, by which means the rider is never thrown off her guard, and is prepared for every crisis. She must also always keep the horse's mouth in easy play, in the manner already described, in order to preserve in him the fine feeling so requisite to the horse's correct guidance, and to the maintenance of true action. If at any moment the rider feel the horse's action declining against her will, an animating touch of the fingers, the leg, or the whip, for instantly correcting it, must be applied. The hand is the first to discover any relinquishment that is going to take place, and, consequently, the first to correct it; the heel, or heel and whip, at the same moment, forcing him up to the bridle.

“It is natural with beginners to suppose that, the faster they ride, the better they ride; but, however gratifying the riding fast may be, there is more skill displayed in keeping up an animated action in the canter, or united gallop, at the rate of even four miles an hour, than at that of twelve or fifteen miles an hour. The attention of the pupil should therefore be, to keep up the animation and action of the canter without going fast. If the animation fail, or the action be not supported by the hand, the horse will break into the trot, particularly as the canter is shortened or united.”—ADAMS.

As a lady, after having passed her noviciate, usually rides upon the curb, she cannot be too deeply impressed with the necessity of a constant attention to its proper management, by means of which a correspondence between the mouth of the horse, and the hand of the rider is maintained. “The curb requires a light hand in the management. It is necessary to feel and ease the reins in the degree suitable to the individual horse. Some horses require rather a firmer feel than others, and most have some peculiarity, which experienced riders discover, and turn to account. When judiciously held, it occasions a playful action on the horse’s mouth. It is by a firm, easy, and light hand only, that the sensibility and freshness of feeling of the horse’s mouth, so essential in riding, can be preserved.”—ADAMS.

The fair rider must remember that, from the ordinary position

of the bridle hand, the little finger should have at least three lines of action *upward* to guide the horse; viz.:—towards the right shoulder—towards the left—and towards the breast. On these lines the little finger should move only as the aids require. Thus the horse will be guided, and lifted up at each turn, by the inward or leading rein, the outward acting in unity with it.

Let the body ever accommodate itself with an easy pliancy to the movements of the horse; a lack of energy in this respect effectually prevents a lady becoming a good horsewoman, and the horse is hindered from going in good form, or shewing himself to advantage, when carrying an unalert, or indolent, rider.

She must, upon all occasions, be studious of cultivating self-possession. The least symptom of alarm on her part immediately communicates itself to the horse, whose own terror, or vice, is, as it were, electrically increased by it. Above all, as she values her own life, she must, in these crises, scrupulously avoid neglecting the reins in order to hold on by the crutch. The mere advancing of the hand for such a purpose causes her to lean forward, and relax the reins, and, in that one instant, the horse gains an advantage that cannot easily be recovered. On the first appearance of danger, the proper position of the right hand, except in rearing, is on the off rein. Coolness, with a proper attention to the rules to be

observed in critical situations, will then enable the rider to extricate herself with safety, and “*éclât*.”

In crossing a ford in hot weather, the horse's head should be kept up, and himself be pushed on to the opposite side. If allowed to stop, and drink, he is not unlikely to lie down in the water, and, to say nothing of other evils that may arise from this disposition, an “*impromptu*” bath, under such circumstances, is far from improving the equestrian toilette.

In riding on a road that has been newly repaired, the rider should avoid its sides where the stones lay singly on the hard ground; it is much safer to ride slowly where the gravel or stones being thick, and loose, give way to the horse's feet without hurting him.

In travelling on a bad road, though the rider must keep a watchful hand upon her horse, she must give him his head, so as to enable him to use his own natural instinct in picking his way with safety.

If a horse stumble, and come down upon his knees, or, from any other cause, come to the ground, let not the rider be in a hurry to throw herself off, lest she may do so at the very moment of the horse's being in the act of rising. In this case, the force of the fall

will be greatly increased ; and, should the habit-skirt catch on the head of the saddle, a serious accident must ensue. The horse, besides, may put his foot upon her as he rises. If she is thrown off in the horse's fall, her great solicitude must be to get away from him as soon as possible ; but, if not thrown off, her greatest chance of safety is, in keeping to the saddle, not in any attempt of her own to dismount. The object of the horse is to rise as quickly as he can, and a lady's weight is rarely sufficient to prevent him. If a horse roll on one side in falling, and that is the off-side, but little danger is to be apprehended, even from the lady's being thrown off, so long as the habit-skirt comes clear over the saddle without catching on the head,—and, if she keep to the saddle, the worst that is likely to happen is, the tearing of the habit-skirt by the horse's hind feet in rising. Should the horse roll on the near side, and the lady be thrown, the immediate assistance of the cavalier or groom is required to extricate her from a position which is, more or less, one of danger, as her feet and habit-skirt may be under the horse, and her power of assisting herself consequently destroyed. I have often been told by gentlemen that, there is “a great art in falling ;” and I can well understand that with them such is the case, especially in the hunting field. But the position and costume of a lady render her comparatively so helpless upon these trying occasions, that I am convinced,—and long experience confirms me in the conviction,—that, as a general rule, the greatest chance of safety consists in her keeping as much as possible to the saddle.

If the horse be found at any time going on one side, with an uneasy restless gait, and with an occasional movement as of an intention to kick, the rider may rest assured either of the saddle's being improperly adjusted, or having something about it that hurts him. In these circumstances she should alight as soon as possible, and have the saddle re-adjusted or removed, and examined; otherwise, the horse may become restive, or his back be so injured as to unfit him for use for some time.

If a horse, that is usually gay and free in action, appear at any time dull, and droop his head, and at the same time have his coat "staring," especially about the upper part of the neck, immediately behind the ears; or if he cough, his rider may at once be certain of his being "amiss;" and the sooner he is returned to the stable, the more speedy will be his recovery. There may be merely some slight ailment, which, if taken in time, may soon be removed, provided the groom is prohibited from using any favourite nostrums of his own,—the blacksmith is passed over,—and a respectable and properly qualified veterinary surgeon is called in for the case. But if the horse continues to be ridden in such a state, or exposed to the cold whilst his mistress is paying a visit, and ignorantly treated afterwards, he may, from the natural delicacy of the animal, be lost in a few days, or even hours. At the best, his mistress may be deprived of his services for many weeks.

A lady should never enter into contest with her horse, if it can be avoided. Without being naturally vicious, or restive, a horse may at times suddenly refuse to advance, or turn, in some particular direction. If he cannot be coaxed, or encouraged, into obedience by his rider, such an animal will generally suffer himself to be led past the obnoxious point by another person. For this purpose the groom may alight, or a passer-by be requested to lead him a few yards by gently taking the bridoon rein, and by patting, and enticing him to advance, while quietly falling away from him as he shews a disposition to obedience. In this case, however, some nicety is required in leading a horse. It is not known to every rider, that the person who would lead a horse by the bridle, should not turn his face to him on his instantly refusing to follow; in doing so, besides pulling the bridle with jerks, he frightens the horse instead of persuading him to accomplish that which may be effected with a moderate share of patience.

Ladies ought not to ride horses which require severe punishment; but should any growing vice, that will not yield to more gentle treatment, at any time absolutely call for stricter measures, these obviously can not only be administered with better effect, but with far greater propriety, by a masculine hand; moderate corrections, however, are sometimes necessary, when there should be no scruple in resorting to them, but never, unless the occasion calls for them.

With respect to that much vexed Amazonian question, "the use of the spur," there are some few instances in which it may be worn by the fair rider with propriety. For instance—by a lady who is perfect mistress of the art—by one equally proficient, who is in the habit of riding different horses—or by one with the like knowledge in the hunting field, where its use is sometimes absolutely required. An animal, however, that is worthy of being called a lady's horse, needs no spur, and the old adage against urging a willing horse is one which, I am sure, is too familiar for repetition here. The spur inflicts a very sharp punishment on the animal which is subject to it, and if incautiously, or unfeelingly, and severely used, is apt to excite, in a high spirited animal, a degree of madness which exposes an unskilful rider to great danger. As a general rule, therefore, I strenuously advise my fair readers to discard the spur, that they may not, unintentionally, inflict uncalled for pain, and lest, as the renowned Mr. Jorrocks says of young gentlemen in his *sporting lecture*, "they use them incontinently, and come to grief."

HUNTING.

"How melts my beating heart, as I behold
Each lovely nymph, our Island's boast and pride,
Push on the generous steed that sweeps along
O'er rough, o'er smooth, nor heeds the steepy hill,
Nor falters in the extended vale below."

SOMERVILLE.

Tantara, tantara, the hunt is up,
And it is well nigh day,
Harry our king is gone hunting,
To bring the deer to bay.

The East is bright with rosy light,
And darkness it is fled,
The merry horn awakes the morn,
To leave his idle bed.

Arise, arise, unclothe your eyes
To meet the golden ray;
Happy and free, right merrilie,
We'll mount and ride away.

The birds they sing, the deer they fling,
The eager hunters fly,
The merry horn proclaims the morn,
So up to join the cry.

The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
And now 'tis perfect day,
Harry, our king, is gone hunting
To bring the deer to bay.

OLD SONG.*

* This song is taken from an interesting little book entitled the "Household of Sir Thomas More," being a diary kept by his daughter Margaret, in which is written under date Sept. 4, A.D. 1523:—"Supped with my Lord Sands; wound up the evening with musick; Lord Sands sang a

THE subject of ladies' hunting has been so much mooted of late years, that a few remarks upon that point may fairly be expected from me, by my fair readers; before, however, presuming to offer views of my own, I may state, as a well known fact, that the opinions of the opposite sex are generally adverse to their partaking of the sport. To this conclusion gentlemen are led by various reasons, of which not the least is, as I have been repeatedly told, the being unable to banish from their minds a constant sense of the especial danger that follows ladies in the hunting field. The late gallant Colonel Cook, many years a master of fox-hounds, and the author of an agreeable and well known treatise on the sport, used to say that, he was always pleased to see his meets graced by the presence of ladies; it not only made the few minutes that usually elapsed before the business of the day commenced pass delightfully, but it showed the interest that they took in the amusement of their husbands and brothers. But, never, he always added,—never beyond the meet—except in those rare instances of ladies who, from early or long association, have a thorough knowledge of the sport, or whose witching feats of horsemanship assured, at the same time that they charmed, the spectator. Similar opinions might be produced to any extent, but being all to the same, or nearly the same effect, one will suffice.

new ballad, called 'The King's hunt is up,' which father affected hugelie. I lacked spirit to sue my Lord for the words, he being so free spoken as to dash me; howbeit, I mind they ran somewhat thus—Tantara, tantara, the hunt is up, &c., &c."

When it is considered how few ladies possess either the requisite skill for riding "across country," or the knowledge of what is required of them in so novel a position as the hunting field, this feeling of confining them to the meets cannot be wondered at. So seldom does it happen that the same readiness and knowledge of the sport is displayed, that I have been much impressed with an anecdote of a lady, who is still esteemed one of the best horsewomen in the West of England, and cannot help repeating it for the amusement of my readers. Whilst passing a couple of winters at Bath, of which gay city she rejoiced in being styled the "belle," she frequently joined the hunt of that truly noble and veteran sportsman, the grandsire of the present Duke of Beaufort. The first time she appeared in the field with his Grace's hounds—having been devoted to the sport from early youth in the district where her family resided—she rode into a piece of gorse in which a fox had formed his kennel. No sooner was Reynard on foot, than she loudly proclaimed the fact by two or three most orthodox and musical view-halloos. The Duke, who was in an adjoining field with the hounds, not a little astonished to hear such melody from the lips of a lady, rode hastily up to enquire into the cause, and learned from her own statement that she had *viewed* a fox away. "How do you know, asked the Duke, that it was a *fox*?" "Because," responded the young and elegantly formed equestrian, "I rode in upon his back and *unkennelled* him, and he has gone *down wind* to Badminton." The answer was so technically given,

that all doubt was at once removed from his Grace's mind, who, courteously bowing his acknowledgment, caused the hounds to be immediately capped on to the line. The result was a brilliant run, through the whole of which the unremitting attention of the Duke to the fair Amazon, whose side he never quitted, added not a little to her enjoyment; nor was she at all at a loss, or behind-hand, in urging her steed over wall or fence, the Duke being her leader.

This lady, then, the unmarried and favourite daughter of a gallant and wealthy admiral, lacked not the attentions of admirers either in the field, or in the drawing-room. The wide-spread fame of her manifold accomplishments, her bright eyes, and ample dower, attracted suitors from all quarters; and among them came a certain gentleman, well-known in the fashionable circles of London, who had been recently introduced to her family. On the first morning after his arrival in the country, it happened that the North Devon Stag Hounds were about to draw one of the fine coverts belonging to the late Earl of Fortescue—than whom a finer specimen of the true old English gentleman never lived to cheer, to warm, and to solace the hearts of the poorer, no less than to dispense genuine hospitality among the independent and affluent of his neighbours and friends. This digression will be readily pardoned by all who have had the high honour and happiness to know him—for “to know him was to love him;” and when the time arrived

for his dissolution, every heart was filled with unparalleled distress—

“ And now old time has led him to his end,
Goodness and he fill up one monument.”

But I must now return to our fair heroine, and her lover. It was a hunting morning, and the Castle Hill coverts the fixture, (for in that country the stag is unharboured from his native wilds,) the distance easy, and the country romantic. The lady knowing no finer sport to which to invite her newly-formed acquaintance, ordered her own favourite mare, who was well up in all that could be required of her in the hunting field, to be prepared for him; and, with the key to the rides and hunting gates of this lordly domain always in her possession, they sallied forth

“ To rouse the stag with hound, and bugle horn.”

It happened that, a portion of a farm through which they had to pass was divided for a sheep-fold. Here the lady led the way, and gallantly charged the fence, expecting her companion to follow the example; but, alas, the faint heart, which never yet won fair lady, died within him! The lady, thus destined either to lose the day's sport, or proceed alone, at once adopted the latter alternative, and, cantering gaily on, turned to wave her adieus to her London lover, whose last fond glance—in her own words—was directed to her from the *wrong* side of the sheep-hurdles. The disappointed swain,—dreading, perhaps, the railery on his lack of courage and

gallantry, that awaited him from the company at the Hall in the evening, more than even the sheep hurdles in the morning,—at once returned, ordered horses to his carriage, and, before the pleasures of the chace had concluded, was several stages on his way back to the metropolis.

It is not, however, always "*couleur de rose*" with ladies in the hunting field. I remember a young lady's attending a meet on a horse altogether unused to hounds, and incautiously riding too near them, immediately prior to their being thrown into covert. The horse, as is usual with one unaccustomed to hounds, became nervous and restless on being surrounded by some of them. At length he kicked at, and killed one, that unhappily chanced to be the most valuable hound in the pack. Now, it is difficult to conceive a greater vexation than that which is experienced by a master of hounds on losing a favourite in such a manner, unless, indeed, it be that felt by the author of the misfortune. In this case the offence was never forgiven, nor forgotten, by the owner; who never indeed could be induced to believe in the benign influences of "a southerly wind and a cloudy sky," whenever he afterwards observed, to use his own invariable words upon such occasions, "that bird of ill omen hovering about the covert side." The young lady, however, was too careful and considerate ever to run such a risk again; and, further, had cured her horse of his nervousness, by having a dog kept in the stable with him—than which, by the bye, there is no

better mode of removing the alarm, and dislike, which many horses entertain for dogs generally.

When we consider the great value of hounds, the extreme difficulty of replacing good ones, and the attachment of their owners for them, there can be no wonder at the angry feelings and fears of masters of hounds on seeing them exposed to the chance of being ridden over, or destroyed.

A lady, in merely attending a meet, unless mounted on a seasoned hunter, may sometimes run into danger if she remain with the hounds after they are thrown into covert; for, should they find quickly, and go away immediately, a horse not steady to hounds may become so excited by the music, and by the example of other horses starting off at full speed, as occasionally to place even a well-experienced horsewoman in jeopardy.

Upon the principle of practising what one preaches, I have always felt a delicacy in giving my own opinion on the question of ladies hunting; for having, in my younger days, indulged much in the sport (of which I was enthusiastically fond), to dissuade ladies from engaging in it, except in particular instances, is a counsel which may be little attended to from lips of mine. In speaking of hunting, I do not refer to a mere gallop with the harriers on the Brighton Downs, or similar places; for, if they are properly mounted

for the purpose, such exercise may be considered legitimate ladies' hunting. They have not far to go from home; they can join them when they like, and leave when they like; and last, but not least, there are usually several of their own sex present to assist them in case of accident. But my counsel and caution refer to the more exciting and hazardous sport of foxhunting, which calls for consummate skill in riding,—a knowledge of the sport that can *alone* be acquired by experience and practice,—the most determined courage, and great power of enduring fatigue—a spirit that holds in contempt both wind and storm,—and a constitution that sets at defiance coughs, colds, and rheumatism. In almost every part of the country two or three ladies are to be found who greatly distinguish themselves in the hunting field, and who are regarded with just pride by the hunts to which they belong. If, therefore, a lady really feels herself endowed with the necessary qualifications for following this amusement, she may then safely attempt it, and may rest assured that her presence in the field will never fail of being hailed with delight. But, unless ladies can command the requisite skill, and are constitutionally equal to the fatigue which hunting entails—which is the case of but very few indeed—whilst allowed to express the hope that they will ever lend their all-powerful influence to upholding this noble and truly national sport, I can only echo the opinion of the gallant colonel before-named—that their practical share in it should be limited to gracing the meet at the covert side.

CONCLUSION.

“And what is writ, is writ;
Would it were worthier!”

“Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been,
A sound which makes us linger; yet—farewell.”

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

My pleasing task is o'er; and, sincerely thanking my gentle readers for having patiently, and I trust not unprofitably to themselves, followed me in their perusal of these pages, I now bid them reluctantly—farewell. In taking leave of a much-loved theme—endeared alike by memory and practice—I part from it with the greater regret, as having been busied in reviving a subject which actively recalls much that was joyous of the past—of those ne'er-to-be-forgotten sunny hours of equestrian delights, made brighter by the presence of many a fair votary, whose graceful mien, willing ear, and ever-ready hands have borne ample testimony to the correctness of the rules, and principles, that are now deliberately written down as similar guides for others. Let me here be pardoned for citing the quaint, yet beautiful, language of that great master

of the art, the Duke of Newcastle, before alluded to, as anticipating and sanctioning my own views and feelings on this subject.

“ I have loved, practised, and studied this art of horsemanship from my youth upwards, and employed in it a great deal of time with pleasure ; for there is no exercise so good, nor is any attended with more honour and dignity, than that of riding, provided a person rides with address, which he cannot do unless he is well versed in the art. Without it, nothing seems so ridiculous, so awkward, or so irregular, as a man on horseback. His members appear to be dislocated, because they are out of their natural situation ; and his posture uneasy, because it is constrained ;—whereas, a good rider sits in his natural place, and his posture is easy, because free and unconstrained. It is in horsemanship as in other things ; regularity is beautiful, while distortion and compulsion must be without grace. There is an elegance, moreover, in horsemanship, which looks as if it was natural, though it proceeds from art. Thus, though a perfect horseman rides with art, it seems rather natural than acquired by practice ; and he makes his horse appear as if nature had produced such a creature for no other end, but to be governed, conducted, and ridden by man.”

Although his Grace's exquisite delineation of the art of horsemanship was addressed to the opposite sex, I am sure that my fair readers will not be slow to discover how applicable it is to them—

selves, and will recognise in the remarks all that is desirable in them to imitate and to shun.

“ 'Tis good to see a steed of noble race
By woman ruled with skill and mastery ;
The smitten air gives freshness to her face,
And animation glistens in her eye ;
Her very breathing quickens into grace,
And e'en a fault enchants. Few things outvie
A lovely woman on a fiery horse,
The mingled form of gentleness and force.”

In compiling this treatise, some may deem my pen both to have occasionally wandered from its track, and at times to have lingered, perchance, on points that might have been more summarily disposed of ; but truly, in dealing with a matter of this nature, to keep the “*juste milieu*” betwixt brevity and prolixity is not always easy ; and I was apprehensive lest a too strict adherence to the former might leave a vacuum in the measure of instruction which I have been so anxious to afford. Those of my fair readers who are, many of them, doubtless, equally able with myself to form an opinion on this subject, will know that the detail I have entered into was required in behalf of the uninitiated. In directing a course of study, it is necessary to explain, as lucidly and completely as possible, the defects, no less than the beauties of equestrian deportment ; and, in all matters tending to preservation from danger, to point out not only what is to be done, but also, upon such occasions, what is to be avoided. On this head it will not be unacceptable once more to refer to the same noble author.

“ Those things which to you, perhaps, seem not very concise, but too prolix, might if shorter have left you still in darkness ; whereas, you have now a full sunshine to look on you with the splendour of the knowledge of horsemanship. This art does not consist only in study and mental contemplation, but in bodily practice likewise. You ought to be well informed that the art of horsemanship cannot be collected together in a proverb, or a short aphorism ; or reduced to a syllogism, or brought into as little compass as the poesy of a ring ; nor can there be one universal lesson, as many desire in this art. For my part, I am very sure there is nothing universal in horsemanship, nor in anything else that I know. If this book pleases you, I shall be thoroughly well content.”

And, for myself, may it be said in conclusion, that if the perusal of the present work do but prove the means of rescuing beauty from ridicule, and mishap,—and of imparting to a healthful, exhilarating, and noble recreation, perfect safety, combined with the fascinations of grace and elegance, I shall be content too.

FINIS.

The Authoress respectfully informs the Subscribers to the "HABIT AND THE HORSE" that, should any portion of the Work appear obscure to her fair readers, she will be happy to attend to any communication from them on the subject. Letters addressed to her at 46, Wigmore Street, Cavendish Square, W., will be immediately forwarded.

G. B. L. Bindery.
JUL 24 1911

